K. Chellappan

SHAKESPEARE AND ILANGO AS TRAGEDIANS

A Comparative Study

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TAMIL UNIVERSITY
Thanjavur

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PREFACE

"Thou art the author of good deeds -- as well as the bad ones; How could I ever be the centre of anything?" These words of Māṇickavāchakar are almost echoed by Eliot's Becket: "Neither does the agent suffer/Nor the patient act: But both are fixed in an eternal action".

The invocation of eternity is not meant to involve God in my imperfections but to indicate that individual talent is only a personal realisation of a tradition which in some way is linked with the Primal Word. This work, originally submitted to Madurai University as a doctoral dissertation, was made possible by the creative confluence of ideas and other acts of kindness of many, the acknowledgement of which is only a poor shadow of the archetypal feeling which is unutterable.

Foremost among my helpers is my great teacher and guide, the Late Prof.T.P.Meenakshisundaranar who pioneered several new branches in Tamil studies including Comparative Literature and whose breadth of vision coupled with disciplined scholarship illumined all that was dark in my work and I am proud of dedicating this work at the feet of that scholar.

There are so many other scholars, Dr.M.P.Sivagnanam, Dr. V.SP.Manickam, Dr.A.C.Chettiar, Dr.Mu.Varadarajan and Dr.V.I.Subramoniam to whom I owe a lot for their perspective remarks on **Cilappatikāram** --and to Dr.V.I.Subramoniam, I owe a special word of thanks for not only being the beacon-light to all serious scholarly pursuit in Tamil but also for bringing this work to light. I am very happy that the work which was conceived when I was in Annamalai University, written in the original form in Madurai University, is now being published by the Tamil University.

I also remember with gratitude the help of my professors the Late M.S.Duraisamy and the Late G.Gopalakrishnan, Prof.M.-M.Ghani, Prof.Brockbank and Prof.Calderwood for their insights into Shakespeare. My thanks are also due to Prof.-V.Sachidanandan, Dr.S.Ramakrishnan, Dr.A.A.Manavalan and Dr.K.Meenakshisundaram with whom I have had useful discussions, particularly on comparative method.

My thanks are also due to the authorities of the Madurai-Kamaraj University particularly Prof.J.Ramachandran, Vice-Chancellor and Major P.P.Chinnadurai, Registrar for according permission to publish this dissertation. I am also grateful to Dr.N.D.Sundaravadivelu, formerly Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras and Dr.P.S.Mani Sundaram, formerly Vice-Chancellor, Bharathidasan University, for their encouragement.

My thanks are also due to the Librarians of the Madurai-Kamaraj University and the British Council for their help--and to Dr.N.S.Prabhu of the British Council and Prof.T.V.Subba Rao for going through some of my chapters.

My heartfelt thanks are due to the Publications Department of the Tamil University, Tanjore, particularly to Mr. Ilancheran and Mr.V.Perampalam and to my scholar Thiru N.Natarajan for their perceptive, patient work without which the book would not have been brought out so well and so quickly.

Finally, a purely personal note: when I started this work, my mother was supporting me though invisibly; when I was writing it in the original form, my nieces helped me a lot--particularly the younger one, who is no more. Now when I am completing the revision, my grandniece is playfully collaborating with me and she claims that the work is hers. Perhaps, she is right.

A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION

In transliterating Tamil, the system set forth and used in the **Tamil Lexicon** (Madras University Publication) has been followed. The table is given below for ready reference:

அ	— a	க்	— k	வ்	— v
ஆ	— ā	ங்	— ṅ	ழ்	— ḻ
இ	— i	ச்	— c	ள்	— ḷ
ஈ	— ī	ஞ்	— ñ	ற்	— ṟ
உ	— u	ட்	— ṭ	ன்	— ṉ
ஊ	— ū	ண்	— ṇ	ஜ்	— j
எ	— e	த்	— t	ஶ்	— ś
ஏ	— ē	ந்	— n	ஷ்	— ṣ
ஐ	— ai	ப்	— p	ஸ்	— s
ஒ	— o	ம்	— m	ஹ்	— h
ஓ	— ō	ய்	— y	க்ஷ்	— Kṣ
ஔ	— au	ர்	— r		
ஃ	— ḵ	ல்	— l		

TAMIL LEXICON. VOL.I (Madras University, 1936), p.lxviii.

Names of places, persons and gods such as **Madurai, Kavundhi Adikal** and **Muruga** and even other Indian words eg. **Karma** which are internationally current have not been transliterated. Only other words such as **Viti** (   ) have been transliterated. The titles of **Kātais** in **Cilappatikāram** have been transliterated. But when the names of **Kāṇṭams** are mentioned, the place names have been given their conventional spellings only, eg. **Maduraik Kāṇṭam** (and not Maturaikkāṇṭam).

Translation:

Passages from **Cilappatikāram** and other Tamil Texts have been translated wherever necessary by the present writer himself. The aim has been not to render them into poetry, but simply to recapture the exact connotations of the original. Only the Tamil words **Kāṇṭam** and **Kātai** have been used and not their English equivalents such as **book** and **canto** as it was felt that the equivalents do not convey the exact connotations of their Tamil counterparts.

A NOTE ON DOCUMENTATION

All quotations from Shakespeare used in this book are from **William Shakespeare: The Complete Works,** ed. Peter Alexander (1951; rpt. London and Glasgow: The English Language Book Society and Collins, 1964).

Cilappatikāram Original with Notes ed. N.M.-Venkatasami Nattar (1942, rpt. Tirunelveli, The Tirunelveli South India Saiva Siddhanta Publications, 1966) has been used for reference and translation.

The references to both Shakespeare and Ilango are given in the Notes. For quotations from Shakespeare, the Arabic numeral stands for the number of the Act, the following Roman numeral for the number of the Scene, and the final Roman numeral(s) for the line(s). For quotations from Ilango, the Arabic numeral indicates the number of the **Kāṇṭam** (Book), the following Roman numbers, stand for the numbers of the **Kātai** and the line(s) respectively. For example "III, 25, 69-70 would mean, **Vañcik Kāṇṭam, Kāṭcik Kātai,** lines 69 and 70.

CILAPPATIKĀRAM : A SYNOPSIS

The Patikam describes the context of the composition of the epic: The Kuravas of the hills refer to Kannaki who had lost one breast and came to the Venkai tree on the hills from where she was taken to the kingdom of heaven to be reunited with her husband. Sattanar gives the details of Kannaki's heroic tragedy begun in Pukar, ripened in Madurai and resolved in Vanci and attributes it to the ripening of the fate. Ilango chooses to write **The Lay of the Anklet,** as the anklet was the pivot of the story illustrating the inexorable nature of fate, the glorification of the chaste woman and Justice or Dharma becoming the avenging death of those violating the political code.

The Book of Pukār : Canto I : The epic proper begins with an invocation to the Sun, Rains and Pukar in that order, which are symbolic of the different aspects of the king. First, the twelve-year old heroine, Kannaki of the Manaykan family, with the beauty of Lakshmi and chastity of Aruntati is introduced, as the culmination of the land and its tradition. Then the sixteen-year old hero, Kovalan of the Masattuvan family, a visible god of love, is introduced.

They are married with pomp and ritual at the end of which the bride is blessed negatively and with irony: 'Long live, **without** being separated from the lover, without the embracing hand slipping, and **without** evil'.

Canto II speaks of the cup of joy which the couple drank to the depth and also gives an elaborate description of Kannaki by Kovalan, almost deifying her.

Canto III is the structural parallel to Canto I and introduces Madhavi, the counterpart to Kannaki, whose dance performance in the King's court is as elaborately described as the marriage of Kannaki and the garland given by the king is purchased by Kovalan who goes to live with her. forgetting his own home of flawless purity.

Canto IV : An elaborate description of the arrival of evening is humanised with reference to a symmetrical description of two types of women represented by Kannaki and Madhavi, those united with their lovers and those separated from them.

Canto V moves from the cosmic to the human setting and speaks about the festival of Indra, relates the breeze of the hill to Kovalan and other men praising the courtesan women. There were tears of joy and suffering in the eyes

of Kannaki and Madhavi, and then the twitching of the right and left eye of Madhavi and Kannaki indicating the future.

Canto VI deals with bathing in the sea and the dance of Madhavi, followed by union and pleasant quarrels with her lover on the beach.

Canto VII deals with the 'crisis' of the epic consequent on the duel of lyrics sung by Kovalan and Madhavi praising an imaginary heroine and hero respectively. Kovalan completely misunderstands Madhavi's 'role playing' and calls her the embodiment of illusion because he mistook poetic enactment for reality and leaves her, thanks to the fruition of his earlier deeds or 'Viṉai'. The Cauvery merging with the sea is the outward setting and theme as well as the silent spectator of their tragic separation.

Canto VIII: The cruel spring brings life into the land and awakens memory and desire in lovers like Madhavi who writes a classic letter of love which subtly accuses only the season with a pen dipped as it were, in love. Kovalan refuses to receive it.

Canto IX describes their journey across the land and their meeting Saint Kavundhi, who also chooses to accompany them. On the way, when some evil characters speak ill of them the Saint curses them whereas Kovalan and Kannaki plead for forgiveness.

Book II : Canto XI : If the theme of Book of Pukar is the dialectics of union and separation (the union leading to separation or union for one as separation for the other) the Book of Madurai deals with journey. For Kannaki there is the journey to Madurai with Kovalan, and the journey from Madurai without Kovalan. There is also a change from Marudam and Neydal to Mullai or forest (a prelude to tragedy) when the deity of forest appears in the shape of Vasanthamālai.

Canto XII elaborates the choric dance of the hunters celebrating the triumph of Koṟṟavai. The possessed Salini is able to visualise the future glory of Kannaki.

Canto XIII : With a concern for Kannaki's health and a tragic trust even in the beasts of the land of the just kings, they travel during the night. Kausikan hands over the second letter of Madhavi. If the earlier letter was ripe with sensuousness, the second letter breathed a saintly sereni-

ty in which Madhavi simply idealises even Kovalan as a saint and shows her puzzle at his action. Dramatically, Kovalan quietly sends the same letter as his message to his parents. Browsing the beauty of the Vaigai, they reach the outskirts of Madurai.

Canto XIV : Kovalan and Kannaki have a sight-seeing tour of Madurai with its elaborate streets.

Canto XV : When Kovalan speaks of the splendour of the city and the justice of the king, Mādalan arrives and recalls the good deeds of Kovalan in his youth. This is meant to evoke sympathy for the hero before he dies. Kovalan then speaks of his dream foreboding evil. Kavundhi Adikal entrusts Kannaki to Mādhari, an old shepherdess who takes Kannaki home.

Canto XVI : Kannaki prepares food for Kovalan and scene of domestic bliss follows at the end of which Kannaki blames Kovalan for having denied her the privileges and social duties of a wife in the past. In a tragic confluence of events, Kovalan chooses to take only one anklet to be sold and then encounters the goldsmith (shall we say, his Nemesis) who hastens to misinform the king that he has found the culprit along with the lost anklet of the queen. The king too hastily (again because of fate) orders that the anklet be recovered and the culprit executed. Even the guards hesitate to kill Kovalan who falls a victim to a drunkard's sword.

Canto XVII is an elaborate description of the dance-cum-song of the shepherdesses praising Mayoon which helps to distance the horror consequent on the catastrophe.

Canto XVIII : Madhari brings the news of the death of Kovalan. The shattered heroine asks the Sun to vouschafe if her husband was a robber to which the Voice said, 'No'.

Canto XIX : Kannaki then addresses the chaste women of Madurai, takes a pledge to see her loving husband and rushes to the spot where Kovalan was killed and in a heart-rending cry questions the very existence of chaste women, good men and God in Madurai. Kovalan is resurrected, embraces her and goes to Heaven. Kannaki chooses to seek justice before joining him.

Canto XX is perhaps the most dramatic scene in the epic. The queen of the Pāndiya King narrates her bad dream into which reality makes inroads, when Kannaki the 'goddess

of fury' quickly enters the King's court and introduces herself as the wife of Kovalan killed by his orders. When the king maintains that the robber deserves death punishment, in quick dramatic action, she breaks open the anklet from which the jewel (truth?) springs as it were to silence the king. The separation of the anklets resulted in wrong coupling of the anklets symbolising tragic collision in the final stage, but the very difference in the inner contents of the two anklets (of Kannaki and Kōpperundēvi) resolves the conflict at one level. The anklet which complicated the plot, also brought out the denouement; the anklet symbolised both submission and explosion, silence and communication, the web of fate and triumph of love. (The tragic separation of the two anklets as well their non-use symbolised the tragic division of the lovers and now there is a tragic union of the anklets and the couple). The king dies crying, "I am not the king, I am the robber" and his wife quickly follows him into the land of death, impelled by love. Both language and gesture, speech and silence contribute to the drama in the scene.

Canto XXI : In the name of her chastity, Kannaki takes a vow to destroy the entire Madurai along with the king and tears and throws off her left breast. The god of fire to whom this duty has already been entrusted comes in response to Kannaki who sends her to destroy everyone other than the holy, the chaste, the old and the very young. The harvest of tragedy is complete with the cleansing of Madurai by the god of fire.

Canto XXII : The protecting spirits leave Madurai and fire spreads everywhere and the goddess Madurāpati appears.

Canto XXIII : She speaks to Kannaki about the uprightness of the Pandiya Kings and attributes Neduñchezhiyan's act to a similar deed of Kovalan in the earlier birth. In a moment of recognition, Kannaki considers herself guilty. On reaching the Vēṅkai tree in the hill her husband comes from Heaven with whom she enters the Plane. It is significant that her deification follows the recognition of her own guilt.

Canto XXIV : The Book of Vañci, so called, because now both the epic and the heroine shift to the hill city of the Chēra Kingdom. Now the journey is upward. 'Vañci' also symbolises heroism and triumph after the tragedy. The Kuravas have a vision of Kannaki going up with her husband and worship her, dancing and singing.

Canto XXV : The Chēra King Cheṅguṭṭuvan who with his wife comes to see the sights of the hills is told about

the wonder. When Sāttanār gives more details, Cheṅguṭṭuvan speaks about the tragic predicament of the kings and decides to wear the garland of Vañci with a view to go North to get the stone for erecting the temple for Kannaki.

Canto XXVI : The king leaves blessed by many and in the Gangetic Valley vanquishes Kaṉaka Vijayar. Along with Villavan Kōthai, he brings the stone from the Himalayas for the temple for the chaste woman.

Canto XXVII speaks of the carrying of the stone by Kaṉaka Vijayar, which is purified in the Ganges. Mādalan speaks of his mission as well as the events that followed the catastrophe in the Chōla and the Pāṇḍiya Kingdoms.

Canto XXVIII speaks of Cheṅguṭṭuvan's anger at the words of the Chōla and Pāṇḍiya Kings on his Northern victories and Mādalan's reference to mortality brings home to him that impermanence is the universal human lot and emphasises the need for penance and humility because the wheel of life obeys the law of Karma. The king arranges for penance and consecration of the place for the divine 'Maṅkalam' or marriage complementary to and as a culmination of her 'Maṉai Maṅkalam' or the marriage on the earthly plane in the beginning.

Canto XXIX speaks of the blessing or the praise to Kannaki (which again is parallel to the blessing in the first Canto) by all and Kannaki appears to the King with all her jewels including the anklets, significantly. Total reconciliation and reunion are signified in the words of Kannaki: "The King of the South is spotless; and I am her daughter". The wheel has come full circle; but Kannaki is liberated from the cycle of Karma and her blessing exorcises the evil even from the king, the evil (தீது) introduced when she was blessed in the beginning. The initial blessing has also been fulfilled -- now for all. Blessed is the blesser now -- in a world beyond evil, beyong tragedy. The epic abounds in negatives and references to evil and in the final reference, there is a negation of evil itself (தீதிலன்).

Canto XXX speaks of the renunciation of Maṇimēkalai, the daughter of Madhavi and through three possessed women, the mothers of Kannaki and Kovalan as well as Mādhari 'welcome' Kannaki. All the kings including the Arya King also invoke and obtain the grace of Kannaki who speaks the glory of Ilango through Dēvanti. Iḷaṅgō has the final word **within** and **on** this colossal human drama which is addressed to the entire humanity. Though he refers to the impermanence of youth and wealth, the address ends with an exhortation for living (fully and properly) here and now.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Aims, Method and Scope

Comparison is a source of knowledge and a method of enquiry used by all sciences and a comparative study of literatures across cultures is only an extension and intensification of healthy critical procedures adopted by sensitive readers of literature in all periods and cultures. T.S.Eliot has said that all literature is contemporary;[1] Similarly it can also be said that all literature is universal. The concept of a self-enclosed national literature is becoming outmoded as well as harmful even from the aesthetic point of view. It tends to blur our vision, atrophy our attitudes and conventionalise our responses. On the other hand, a comparative approach to literatures can liberate us from the deadliness and the routine of conventional responses which we all so complacently mistake for life and offer us new angles of perception. In a sense Dante can be the most illuminating critic of Shakespeare and one impulse from the poetic woods of Wordsworth can give us more valuable insights into Manickavasakar than all the critical sages can.

Comparative studies of literature are valuable from a cultural point of view also. They liberate literature from narrow linguistic boundaries and seek to establish the unity of literature and thereby the unity of Man. Wellek and Warren claim that "literature is one, as art and humanity are one".[2] In so far as all great literature is concerned with the universal man they have a common core and comparative literatures can enable us to see national literatures as part of a universal culture. Goethe's ideal of unification of all literatures into "one great synthesis where each nation would play its part in a universal concert"[3] may be a distant star to seek, but the time has come for us to see literature as a unity in diversity and to give importance to these aspects of literature which are shared by all great literatures and thereby

contribute to the evolution of general literature. Just as national histories are now studied as facets of the adventure of the human spirit in general and as stages in the evolution of a world culture, national literatures must also be seen as the many-coloured dome hiding the white radiance of the oneness of humanity.[4] To quote Wellek, "it will study all literature from an international perspective, with a consciousness of the unity of all literary creation and experience. In this conception.... comparative literature is identical with the study of literature independent of linguistic, ethnic and political boundaries."[5]

But all this does not mean any denial of uniqueness to literary works and every work of art being a particular image of a universal situation and a revitalisation of certain recurrent patterns, comparison can and should bring out the distinctness of the two authors or literatures concerned also more clearly. Again as Wellek puts it, "We must beware of false and unnecessary choices: we need both national and general literature, we need both literary history and criticism and we need the wide perspective which only comparative literature can give."[6]

The comparability or universality of great literatures can also be an evaluative criterion. They penetrate the deeper layers of a given culture and whatever systems and codifications they may inherit, it is the intensity of their exploration that matters and, ultimately, what we find in great writers is only "the individual human life, the thing itself underlying codification"[7] which makes them, not of an age but for all time, and we may add, not of a culture, but of the entire humanity. Great literature is not simply concerned with propagation of ideas, but the exploration of the human nature and predicament and that enables them to transcend their milieu. Theodore Spencer claims greatness to Aeschylus and Shakespeare on this basis and says: "The final problem remains; we must try to judge Shakespeare's work in relation to what we believe to be true of human experience as a whole. For the conflict between order and chaos, in the world, the state and the individual, the difference between appearance and truth, the search for what is most natural to man -- these are the central problems of human thought; they were as pressing in the age of Aeschylus as they were in the age of Shakespeare and as they are today. The greatest writers have, directly or indirectly, always been concerned with them, and though these problems may take on different forms in different periods, it is only their accidents that change; the essence remains the same.[8] Certain insights become all the more valuable not because they are **repeated,**

but because they are **rediscovered** in a new context and if authors, taking divergent roads, arrive at the same truths, they become universals.

But the insights are never separable from their forms in great literature and their form and meaning are discovered simultaneously and it is interesting to see how different cultures have evolved similar forms for conveying certain experiences even though there is considerable overlapping in the areas of experience covered by literary genres in different cultures. But in certain fundamentals they are alike and great literature always attains a muteness and a mythic simplicity which has vast reverberations and which again speaks straight to all humanity. G.Steiner refers to "the rich soil of myth and archaic feeling which make **Oedipus, King Lear** or **Faust** resonant beyond their geographic and temporal borders,"9 and says: "The **Orestia, Hamlet** and **Faust** are world possessions although their essential poetry is untranslatable. The elements of plot, character, and argument seem to retain sufficient power to 'come across' in languages alien or inferior to the original."[10] Sapir speaks of a linguistic algebra with reference to the language of great poetry[11] and it is surprising to note that such a heterogeneous mind as T.S.Eliot echoes this idea when he says that there is an underpattern in drama which, as interpreted by David E. Jones, "is quite distinct from the imagery and lie (s) at a much deeper level". Jones adds that "it may be at the root of the action and have the quality of myth, an archetypal pattern of human experiences, an ineffable vision of supernatural reality."[11a] This mythic dimension of great literatures preserves the common core of humanity where cultural barriers become irrelevant.

G.S.Frazer's **The Golden Bough** has also demonstrated the oneness of humanity with reference to similarities in rituals and myths of the various cultures and great literature always has the qualities of myth and ritual. Toynbee's monumental **Study of History** has revealed to us the working of similar forces in the history of unrelated cultures. E.O.James's **Comparative Religion** has also established parallel movements in the history of different religions and they have also felt that "every where at all times the human mind acts according to specific laws of thought and action rather than as a result of cultural connections."[12]

It is with these basic assumptions that we propose to make a comparative study of Shakespeare and Ilango who can be described as two great peaks in the evolution of human consciousness and culture. But even at the very beginn-

ing it should be made clear that we are aware of the wide chronological and geographical gap between the two and this is no attempt to establish any 'influences', but only to see whether there are any 'universals.' Ilango's age is one of the most complicated questions in the history of Tamil literature but most of the scholars would place it around the 2nd century A.D. According to Alain Danielou, "The date of 171 A.D. suggested by Ramachandra Dikshitar for the composition of **The Ankle Bracelet**t cannot be very far from reality"[13] and Shakespeare comes much later and there is no question of any influence. But it is possible to see the impact of the Greek tragedians on **Cilappatikāram** as well as Shakespeare and it would be interesting to see the divergent development in the two cultures. We can also see the influence of Vedantic thought on Ilango and the Greeks. But it is equally possible to maintain that Ilango was not influenced by the Greeks and the Greeks were also not influenced by Vedantic thought, and Shakespeare by neither and they may represent historically unrelated phenomena in different cultures. If so, they are all the more valuable as universals becuase of this. The historical connections, if any, may be explored later,but whatever references we make on this aspect will be only incidental to our enquiry which will be comparative not in the historical, but only in the descriptive sense. Even though some comparatists have no use for comparisons that do not involve a real encounter, Wellek has demonstrated the usefulness of this approach. "Nor can be comparison confined to actual historical contacts. There may be, as the experience of recent linguistics should teach literary scholars, as much value in comparing phenomena such as languages or genres historically unrelated as in studying influences discoverable from evidence of . . . . parallels."[14]

But if there are no influences of the two writers on each other, in Tamilnadu, on the one hand, Shakespearean studies have had a tremendous impact on the evolution of modern consciousness in general and the growth of drama in particular and this has resulted in revealing to us new dimensions and depths in Ilango; on the other, our cultural heritage including Ilango has been influencing our approach to Shakespeare and this cultural synthesis is not only inevitable but also necessary in our situation. According to G.Muliyil, "it was T.S.Eliot who said that when we master a language other than our own we acquire a supplementary personality. This has been the privilege of the educated minority in India.. .. Foreigners sometimes accuse us of having split personalities, because we manage to keep what we learn from the West isolated from what we have inherited in our traditions"[15].

But this is not always the case. The best Indians have always responded to the West in a creative way and reciprocally the West has also discovered and enriched some of the best Indians and Tagore and Bharati could be considered as the greatest products of this East-West cultural encounter and synthesis.

More than one writer has referred to the similarities between the Elizabethan England and the resurgent modern India. Prof.V.Y.Kantak finds a parallel between the evolution of the Shakespearean hero from the mediaeval heritage and the evolution of modern consciousness in our society: "On the one hand, Shakespeare remains close to his mediaeval inheritance; on the other, he is content to explore the possibilities for 'unaided' man standing by himself, justifying himself, engaged in being the arbiter of his own values. We are similarly emerging from what may be called a 'ceremonial' conception of life to a 'historical' conception of life."[16]

Muliyil would attribute this very evolution itself to the impact of the West: "For us the impact of the West was as exhilarating as the Renaissance in Europe--indeed it was a rebirth of learning. We too stood between two worlds, one dying and the other waiting to be born. We too could feel with Donne that a new philosophy called all in doubt. Our old world was spent, everything was in pieces, all coherence gone. **Shakespeare in a sense educated us for this new world.** The immobile units of our social system were stirred by new winds of thought."[17] And he adds "The idea of individual responsibility, the impulse to rebel against destiny would prepare us for the new world of industrial and scientific changes... The study of characters like Hamlet, Othello and Lear and Macbeth, products of a free society prepared us for the battles ahead of us. It was initiation into the modern world. We faced the potentialities of human nature, the reality of personal suffering, the terrors of loneliness for the individual, the sense of mystery within areas of life that are inexplicable."[18]

But here one must be careful. It is true that to some extent Shakespeare filled certain gaps in our make-up and the Shakespearean vision was a healthy antidote to an 'over-religious' and 'over-spiritualised' culture, but that is not the whole story. If Shakespeare initiated us into the new world, he also directed us back to our old world and Shakespeare himself came to us not so much as a discovery but as a recovery. The Shakespearean reverence for life was only a new version of certain values embodied in our ancient

literature. It does not mean that Shakespeare had nothing new to offer us, he had so much to offer, but it was also so similar to, though not identical with, our own past and that is why Shakespeare led us back to our roots and made us look back at our own writers from a new angle.

In fact, sensitive Indian students of Shakespeare have always been struck by his proximity to Indian thought and culture and when we read our own literature again, we have been able to see them, as well as Shakespeare, in a new light. Our subconscious has always been making comparisons between Shakespeare and the Indian writers resulting in mutual illumination. Any one can see the similarity between isolated passages--for example, between Shakespeare's

> Had he not resembled my father, as he slept I had done't[19]

and Ilango's

> The King of the South is guiltless...
> I am his daughter.[20]

From this to the perception of similarities between characters such as Kovalan and Antony or Madhavi and Cleopatra or Kavundhi Adikal and Friar Lawrence is an easy step. But all this ultimately points to a deeper affinity in their overall vision and technique and this book only attempts to confirm such an intuition by systematic comparative study.

But to compare Shakespeare and Ilango **in toto** is an impossible task; we can only compare aspects of the two myriad minded poets and, after a closer study of the two writers, it was felt that an enquiry into the similarities and differences of the two poets as tragedians would be most purposeful and practically desirable and that is why the title of the book was changed from **The Poetics and Philosophy of Shakespearean Tragedies and Cilappatikāram:** a comparative study to **Shakespeare and Ilango as Tragedians:** a comparative study. But this itself is fraught with difficulties of another kind, and that itself is an additional motivation for this enquiry.

The first objection arises because tragedy has been generally equated with tragic drama and therefore it may be felt that there is no point in comparing Shakespeare, the dramatist, with Ilango, the epic poet. But to start with, we can say that no less a person than Aristotle has compared epic with tragedy, of course, in essence and to the disadvantage of epic.[21] But if we are concentrating on the thematics, this problem does not arise at all.

But there are also some scholars who would say that **Cilappatikāram** is also a drama, in its own way. Of course from the early times it has been called **Iyal Icai Nātakap Poruḷ Toṭar Nilaic Ceyyuḷ**[22] and there has been an increasing emphasis on the dramatic components of the epic, partly as part of the humanistic revival and the Renaissance of Tamil Literature in the late nineteenth century and the twentieth century, and this again can be partly attributed to a creative response to the Western Literature. This view finds expression in its extreme form in Margabandhu Sarma, who, along with a few other scholars, it must be admitted, has done the most pioneering work in reinterpreting **Cilappatikāram** in the light of Western aesthetics. He says, "We can call the work a drama, if the descriptive passages are removed and we look at the incidents of the story only."[23] But why should we? To be alive to its dramatic properties is one thing, but to equate it with drama is another. The 'drama' of **Cilappatikāram** is not separable from its epic framework and whatever drama is there has been influenced by this and therefore it cannot be equated with Western drama.

A more useful approach would be to acknowledge the distinctness of the genres of Shakespeare's tragedies and **Cilappatikāram** and to see how far the two apparently different genres in two divergent cultures fulfil similar artistic purposes. This will help us to see that genre differences are not ultimate and universal and the classifications are bound to overlap in different cultures and possibly there are other literary universals than the conventional categories we have. It is true that in Western aesthetics tragedy and epic are usually opposed, but in Indian aesthetics epic has been an all-inclusive form including tragedy or something like that, and tragedy as a distinct form, as it is understood in the West, has emerged only very late. Aristotle distinguishes the two and he is also of the view that epic was a phase in the genesis of tragedy and "tragedy, having passed through many changes, it found its natural form, and there it stopped".[24] This implies also the superiority of tragedy to epic, but that is questionable. On the other hand Scaliger considers epic to be the highest of genres and that view is also equally debatable.[25]

Even among the ancients, Aristotle is not alone in making this distinction. To Horace also they are the two most characteristic genres.[26] Schiller and Goethe are among the moderns who cling to this distinction.[27]

But even among the Western aestheticians, are epic

and tragedy always exclusive and are they the only useful ways of classifying literature? Wellek and Warren agree with Victor that we must distinguish ultimate categories from historical kinds and, according to them, lyric, drama and epic are ultimate kinds or literary ultimates, whereas tragedy and comedy are historical kinds and they can be called genres.[28] The ultimate constituents could be song, dialogue and narration and that would mean that epic is a compound literary form and tragedy could cut across all the three and it is only a historical accident that in a given culture tragedy is equated with drama. In the England of the 19th century, the novel evolved from the epic and it became the medium for tragic experience as well. Hobbes has only three basic kinds: the heroic, the scommatic and the pastoral and he includes both epic and tragedy in the heroic.[29] Therefore we would not be wrong if we come to the conclusion that the distinction between epic and tragedy is not fundamental or universal, and at least they are not exclusive in all cultures.

Let us take up the question of genetic relationship between the two. Aristotle's view is that epic is prior to tragedy and tragedy is the culmination of a long process.[30] In this connection one cannot fail to see the parallel development in the evolution of serious literary forms in Greek and Tamil and this is one of the reasons which has made us attempt this comparative study. In both the cultures literature seems to have sprung from a collective group activity in which dance, music and lyric were an integral part and later only they seem to have emerged as distinct entities and again they seem to have been compounded in written literatures. In the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles we see the evolution of a literary form which has absorbed all the three and similarly in **Cilappatikāram** also we see the evolution of a literary form which has absorbed them, but the interesting thing is that the compound here has a different quality and structure. If tragedy, in the ordinary sense of the term, marks the culmination of the literary tradition in the early phases of Greek history, epic in the ordinary sense of the term marks the culmination of the literary tradition in the early phases of Tamil literature. Therefore we have to conclude that the evolution of tragedy from epic is not a universal process; but Aristotle is right in so far as he implies that tragedy and epic have common origins and they also embody some common modes of perception and upto a stage they fulfil similar purposes. In **Cilappatikāram** we see the evolution of both the epic form and a tragic myth and it looks as though they are not separable but only the twin aspects of the one and the same process.

Another possible way of looking at this is to see **Cilappatikāram** as an embryonic tragedy which has been averted and sublimated into an epic and there is a sort of tension between the two tendencies. But that denies an organic form to the work and that is not true to our experience of reading it. To some extent in all great works of art there is bound to be some tension between the form and the spirit, but that should lead on to an ultimate synthesis. In **Cilappatikāram** the tragic myth seeks and finds its fulfilment in and through the epic formand the quest for form and meaning is almost inseparable. One can also partially account for the absence of tragedy and drama in Tamil in the Western sense with reference to this. The evolution of a compound form like this which can bear the tragic experience as well, fulfils those needs and the distinction between drama and epic on the one hand and comedy and tragedy on the other are not vital in this culture. One is tempted to compare this process in literature with a similar process in the evolution of phonemes in languages where the number of contrasts and the areas covered by the values in different systems are not identical.

Actually what we see in **Cilappatikāram** is the converging of the process of the myth formation of a people and also the culmination of some literary traditions and that is why the study of its genre and structure is such a complicated, but at the same time a revealing proce s. The relationship between myth, folklore and written literary forms is very complicated and **Cilappatikāram** seems to be a Kurushetra in which these Kinsmen are engaged in a profound war-embrace. Dr.T.P.Meenakshisundaranar made a most significant contribution to the study of **Cilappatikāram** when he said: "Another important characteristic feature of this epic is the folksong motif used very extensively on important occasions."[31] "Such oral epics sung by Panars etc., could have been enjoyed by the people. Ilango could have made such types as the basis of his songs and blended them into a whole."[32] He is quick to perceive the existence of the Sangam literary tradition in the structure of Kathais. This hint is expanded by P.R.Subramoniam in his paper on **Folklore as the precursor of Literature.** He identifies the folklore element in **Cilappatikāram** with reference to metre, stanza, pattern and repetition and finds it in **Kānal Vari, Āycciyar Kuravai** and **Vāḻttuk Kātai.**[33] But neither of them seems to have referred to the overall mythic and ritualistic structure of the epic. One cannot be sure how far Ilango used actually the words used by folklore including the Panar who have also perpetuated the tradition without denyin

the artistic integrity of the epic, but we will have to admit that it could have assimilated several folk songs and this is a regular process in the epic tradition of all countries. The epic is only an artistic equivalent for the inarticulate emotions and intuitions of a people which evolves into a myth through folklore. One significant thing is that both of them find the folktale element only in the songs of **Cilappatikāram** and some of them are associated with group dances as well. These acts are related to the deeper layers of a people's experience and they are also naturally connected with the classes of fishermen, shepherds and hill-men who are closer to earth, who preserve the tradition and have a rhythmic pattern of existence which is ritualistic. Eliot's theory of the healthy interaction between tradition and individual talent, between the speech rhythms and the literary conventions is beautifully illustrated here.[34]

One cannot fail to remember here that in Greek tragedies also we see embodiments of myths and enactments of rituals both literally and symbolically. **Cilappatikāram** is based upon a ritual i.e., worship of virgin goddess which is parallel to **Naṭukal** and this is actually the perpetuation of a deep-rooted tradition in Tamil culture. The rise of **Cilappatikāram** could be related to the ritualistic dance and song of the people of the hills to celebrate the vision of the virgin deity who to them symbolised the perpetuation of life-rhythms and the welfare of that area and this should have expanded later to the whole Chera Kingdom which has sought renewal of life through a ritual in a larger scale as it was done by King Chenguttuvan. The primitive mind could have easily seen the association of destruction and death with renewal of life. And the epic **Cilappatikāram** itself is a literary equivalent to that ritual, or a ritual in verse. And this is very similar to the roots of Greek tragedy as discovered by the Cambridge School of Classical Anthropologists. But even among the Cambridge Anthropologists there is no unanimity the question of the priority of ritual to myth. As Fergusson puts it, "one of the thornier questions seems to be whether myth or ritual came first. Is the ancient ceremony merely an enactment of the Ur-myth of the year-god-Attis, or Adonis, or Osiris, or the "Fisher-King"-- in any case that Hero-King-Father-High-Priest who fights with his rival, is slain and dismembered, then rises anew with the spring season? Or did the innumerable myths of this kind arise to 'explain' a ritual which was perhaps mimed or danced or sung to celebrate the annual change of season?"[35] And after referring to the combination of myth and ritual in the structure of **Oedipus Rex** he comes to a rather modest conclusion, "It is enough to know that

myth and ritual are close together in their genesis, two direct imitations of the perennial experience of the race."[36] On the other hand Wellek and Warren say, "Historically, myth follows and is correlative to ritual; it is 'the spoken part' of ritual; the story which the ritual enacts."[37] The experience of **Cilappatikāram** only confirms this and **Cilappatikāram** is only the final stage in the crystallisation of myth which was preceded by oral tradition and ritual. Therefore the circumstances associated with the rise of tragedy in Greece and Tamil are surprisingly similar. In both cases the myth and the ritual celebrate a place made sacred by the death and apotheosis of a protagonist and the fertility of land is linked with human sacrifice and, to the primitive mind, the place seems to be profoundly involved with the human destiny. The milieu and the human protagonist are so inextricably interwoven that the welfare of one is the welfare of the other. The significance of the titles of the three Kantams is enriched by this association. **Cilappatikāram** is a story of the three places as well as an individual's or, better still, a national story as well as an individual's. It shows a very clear parallel to **Oedipus at Colonus** and **Murder in the Cathedral** in this respect the only difference being whereas these two begin at the last phase of their heroes' lives, **Cilappatikāram** begins much earlier, but Ilango also preserves unity of time in his own way by making all the important events in **Pukārk Kāṇṭam** take place in the same season and also accelerating the speed of events in the last phase, dealing with the death of Kovalan and deification of Kannaki.[38] The affinity of **Cilappatikāram** with **Murder in the Cathedral** is most significant -- because both are literary correlatives to rituals. Just as Ilango's epic arose as a correlative to the temple erected by King Chenguttuvan, Eliot wrote his play for the Canterbury festival and the play acquires the qualities of a communal prayer, just as **Cilappatikāram** has absorbed the qualities of national rituals. This is most interesting and makes us conclude that cultures, differing from each other in time and space, show similar processes in channelising their creative energies and this affinity between myth, ritual and literature is a most fundamental and deep-rooted phenomenon in the human history and therefore universal.

But the fact remains that with all this, that **Oedipus at Colonus** and **Murder in the Cathedral** are dramas, whereas **Cilappatikāram** is an epic, or at the most a dramatic epic,[39] as Adiyārkku Nallār would put it, and it is all the more interesting because the Sangam age was primarily the age of dramatic lyrics, but that was not followed by the harvest of tragedy. In Greece and **Elizabethan** England the era

of dramatic output is preceded by lyrical exuberance. Dr.T.-P.Meenakshisundaranar gave a most valuable insight into the aesthetics of **Cilappatikāram** when he referred to the evolution of the epic form from the dramatic lyrics of the Sangam age. He has said that each Katai could be treated as the utterance of some characters and they also seem to be isolated. And he also refers to the thin narrative element, particularly in the earlier parts. But it is important to note that the dramatic poetry could evolve into epic because in Sangam dramatic poetry also, the lyrics dramatise only certain moods and themes and they only embody a universalised but static drama. It is quintessential drama -- or to put it in a paradoxical phrase, static and depersonalised drama--becauseno attempt seems to have been made to differentiate personalities with reference to style or theme in those lyrics. This has resulted in the lack of interplay of character upon character to the extent we find in great drama. But there is more particularisation of characters in **Cilappatikāram** than in early dramatic poetry, even though there is no interplay of characters through rapid dialogue. **Dr. Faustus** suggests a parallel here to some extent--Marlowe too is supposed to be more lyrical than dramatic and there is a stillness about action which seems to be one recurrent situation and also there is no interplay of character upon character.

We can illustrate this from **Kānal vari,** where we have the extension of dramatic lyrics, but the result is a more abstract, formal and static kind of drama. There is dramatic tension, but no dramatic action. That is because the lyrical is absorbed in the eternal present and if it is to be fully dramatic it must also be concerned with time past and time future. If there is so much action at one level, but nothing seems to take place, this retarding element is due to the lyrical intensity. The whole thing seems to be taken out of time -- something like this we have in the Storm scenes of **King Lear** or the Prison scene in **The Duchess of Malfi.**

Similarly, in **Manai Aram Paṭutta Kātai,** we have one long lyric from Kovalan preceded by description and followed by a few lines of narration. That one moment is supposed to crystallise the essence of the life of the couple for a number of years. The pattern is description > dramatic lyric > epic narration. But there is unity because the initial description itself is dramatic and the lyric is also descriptive and both lead on to, and are reinforced by, epic narration. Here we have a synthesis, or at least an attempt towards it. In the whole epic also we see this evolution -- in **Pukārk Kāṇṭam** we have more of description and lyrics, in **Maduraik Kāṇṭam**

we have more of drama and lyrics; but in **Vañcik Kāṇṭam** the dramatic and lyrical impulses yield place to narration. One is tempted to see here the whole battle between the various trends in the culture and the final victory is for the epic -- but it has not ousted but absorbed the other elements and in such a compound, which is not exactly drama, but dramatic, it is not difficult to embody tragic experience.

But here again there are difficulties, because it is generally contended that even tragic vision or sense is absent in Indian literature. Some would say that there is no question of death of tragedy here, because there has been no birth of it at all. Kantak, while discussing the Sanskrit tradition, has said: "Sanskrit drama has splendid, serious and tragical scenes but no tragedy. Of suffering and pathos there is a great deal. In this delineation of graciously endured grief there is hardly any equal to it even in Greek drama. But there is no tragedy in the strict sense."[40] But he does not stop there and he generalises for the Indian tradition as a whole and says: "The entire basis of the Indian concept is alien to Tragedy. In fact, as some one said, a tragic close to a Sanskrit play would be as curious as if the Christian Passion play were to be performed as far as the Good Friday scene omitting the Resurrection".[41] Obviously his generalisation is based on the Sanskrit plays, but he postulates a view for the literature of the entire country.

The Westerners have also expressed this view and the classic expression of this view can be found in David John McCutchion. "We begin by noting the absence of tragedy from the Indian literary tradition. Next we note that the full impact of tragedy depends on some such convictions as these; that a man has only one life and after it 'the rest is silence'; that there is a force in the universe which strikes the good as well as the bad which cannot be forestalled or propitiated ('fate'); that life is supremely worth living and the individual life is of great worth. (Cordelia -- that irreplaceable **person** will never come again) Clearly the Hindu tradition, with its belief in **Karma,** emphasis on the community, and view of life as divine **lila,** not ultimately real, is unpropitious for the emergence of tragedy".[42] And he adds that a believing Hindu is less likely to respond to tragedy or interpret it correctly, and he is basing his views on the quarter-century issue of the Sahitya Academy Journal devoted to Shakespeare in India which says that the tragedies, though popular, were improperly understood and their influence was slight.[43]

It may be true that the tragic may vary from culture

to culture and also our response to Shakespeare may have an Indian slant, but to say that the Karmic view of life is always alien to tragic sense or to claim that our response to Shakespeare's tragedies is always distorted seems to be too extreme a view. The Karmic view of life, if properly understood, does not take away human responsibility and in any great work of art worth its name the beliefs are explored rather than enunciated and it only reveals the core behind the codification. Raymond Williams claims that "important tragedy seems to occur neither in periods of real stability nor in periods of open and decisive conflict. Its most common historical setting is the period preceding the substantial breakdown and transformation of an important culture. Its condition is the real tension between old and new; between received beliefs, embodied in institutions and responses, and newly and vividly experienced contradictions and possibilities. If the received beliefs have widely or wholly collapsed, this tension is obviously absent; to that extent their real presence is necessary. **But beliefs can be both active and deeply questioned** not so much by other beliefs as by insistent immediate experience. In such situations, the common process of dramatising and resolving disorder and suffering is intensified to the level which can be most readily recognised as tragedy".[44]

Cilappatikāram portrays a rich culture, but it was also disintegrating. And this is comparable to the twilight of the Elizabethan age. The excessive joy of the earlier period could end only in the world-denial of Jainism, but that view of life when it is making inroads into the consciousness of the people, that is being questioned and **Cilappatikāram** is that questioning. This process can be seen both in the culture and the poet and if we look at the poem from this point of view we can say that Madhavi and Kavundhi Adikal represent the two world views, the old and the new, the appetite for life and the instinct for surrender; and the fact that Kavundhi dies in response to human love, is symbolic of this conflict in the culture and the consciousness of the poet. Here we find an explosive release of the suppressed emotions in the Jain saint and Kavundhi Adikal is not Ilango's mouth-piece but she is the reflector through whom the inner warfare in the poet is dramatised. There is a tragic tug of war in the consciousness of the poet between the life instincts and the death impulses, between assertion and fatalism, between world denial and the beauty of passion and, as in Keats' **Ode to a Nightingale**, we can see in all great tragedies something like a Freudian realisation that fulness is a kind of death and death is also a kind of fulfilment.[45] This double consciousness is there in the Shakespeare universe

also. There also we see the excessive thrill of the Renaissance world dissolving and the Calvinist doctrine which makes man guilty and his fate sealed is beginning to make inroads into the consciousness of the people.

We can see the beginning of this process in Marlowe; himself. But in Shakespeare a different problem arises if it is contended that the tragic sense is incompatible with the Karmic view of life, is it not equally true that the Christian view is equally non-tragic (of course, for quite a different reason), but no one has denied tragic vision to Shakespeare?. In characters like Desdemona and Cordelia there are suggestions of Christian values, but they are not allegoric figures, but complex human beings in whom those values are tested. If the Christian view sees the human tragedy as part of a divine comedy, in Shakespeare the centre is this little earth, the broken arcs and whatever perfect round it may suggest has to be seen only in and through the broken arc here and now. Tragedy may gaze at the heavens, but it has its feet firm on the earth and the vision of both Shakespeare and Ilango is tragic, not religious in this sense. At the most we can only say that **Cilappatikāram** is a work by a Jain, and not a Jain work of art, and they are different things. Similarly in Shakespeare we can see Christian values, but they are explored, rather than demonstrated and there is no promise of a Christian Hereafter. Tragedy encounters the finiteness of man, but that itself makes him long for the infinite and in a sense sees man's finiteness both as his burden and his glory. A superficial religion simply affirms, a superficial tragedy simply denies; great tragedies are religious in a different sense--in the sense that their very denial is an affirmation. This dual awareness is there in both and in **Cilappatikāram**, the very **Patikam**[46] brings out this dualism. If on the one hand it is said that Dharma (**Aram**) will be death to those who deviate from the right path in politics, it is also said that eminent men will worship the chaste woman, which emphasises the human values.[47] And that is why it was felt that further exploration was necessary and this comparative study was undertaken.

It may sound as though the religion of Ilango has been taken for granted. Most of the scholars are of the view that Ilango is a Jain convert, and there are others who think that he is a Hindu. It is possible to hold a third view and say that his personality is completely suppressed and he has acquired only a group personality in the epic. Vellai Varanar says that Ilango with all his adherence to his religious principles, as a poet has not followed the path of religious leaders, but he has only portrayed life as he observed.[48]

Out of the multitudinous variety of gods and worships referred to in **Cilappatikāram** we can see two significant strata emerging--one is Jainism which is the intellectual's creed, the other being the worship of nature deities evolving into the Bhakti cult worshipping the Hindu anthropomorphic gods like Murugan, Mayoon and Kotravai, the religion of the internal proletariat, in the language of Arnold Toynbee.

Our contention is that there is an interpenetration and synthesis of the two trends in **Cilappatikāram** -- and probably this is parallel to the synthesis of the two strata in the poet at the personal level. The beginnings of the Bhakti cult are to be found in the common folk and that is parallel to the humanistic creed of the Jains and, in the wonderful creative synthesis, Ilango has linked them both. The Jains believed in the power of fate as well as the efficacy of human effort to attain salvation, but their emphasis was on world-denial as symbolised in Kavundhi Adikal. But the Hindu way emphasised the grace of god who comes down to save humanity, and in Ilango's vision they are complementary to each other. That is why he refers to the love of Muruga and his intimate relationship with humanity just before describing the deification of Kannaki. Ilango brings both the ways together and possibly he saw them as two aspects of the same reality, but he is emotionally more involved in the religion of the common man. We may say that the inadequacy of Jainism was felt in the culture as well as in the poet's subconscious and that resulted in the release of the ecstatic worship of the Hindu deities. This must have been intensified in the poet, but as a poet, he needed myths and he must have been alive to the beauty of this life. We may say that the suppressed instincts of the poet are finding an imaginative fulfilment and the religion of Ilango or **Cilappatikāram** cannot be simply equated with either Hinduism or Jainism as it is normally understood, but some richer compound where we have an interpenetration of both.[49]

The relationship between the Mahayana and the rise of the worship of Vishnu and Shiva has been referred to by eminent historians such as Toynbee. It has been said that the rise of the Mahayana was part of the same movement as the worships of Vishnu and Shiva, pantheism and a radical monism being common features of the Mahayanian and the Hindu faiths.[50] The Mahayana was the result of the infiltration of the Hindu doctrines and ultimately it led to the triumph of the Post-Buddhaic Hinduism. And it is some such development with regard to Jainism that we see in the society of Ilango which is dramatised also in his epic. Ultimately, it is the religion of the common man that carried the day.

Toynbee also endorses O.Seeck's view that in Rome also the worship of Isis and the Great Mother found its initiates in the dregs of the populace.[51] In Shakespeare also we find the Greek humanism in collision with the Christian ethics. Here again we find a concept of fate being countered by a faith in grace and the god coming down to earth. In Shakespeare also it is difficult to identify his views with any one of them.

This encounter between Jainism and Hinduism is significant in another sense also, because we find here an interpenetration of a scientific culture and a mythic culture which is another **prerequisite** for the tragic sense. Nietzsche refers to three cultures-a scientific culture, an artistic culture and a tragic culture, and he associates Buddhism (and according to some, Brahmanism) with the last.[52] His contention is that only a mythic culture can produce tragedies and this view is endorsed by Steiner as well.[53] But they seem to be over-emphasising one aspect, but, of course, the more important one; but, tragedy is possible only where there is an encounter between a scientific and a religious culture. Both in the Elizabethan England and in Ilango's Tamilnadu we find this collision, but in the two cultures the later development is in different directions. After the seventeenth century the mythic consciousness dissolved in the daylight of scientific thinking in England and that killed tragedy there; but in Tamilnadu the reverse took place and that was also not propitious for tragic writing.

This means that both Shakespeare and Ilango have faced similar problems and both had a tragic sense of life, of course with differences, and hence this study. No attempt has been made to define "tragedy" in a new way and thereby add to the evergrowing list of definitions of tragedy. Aristotle is still a good starting point and his definition and some important interpretations and modifications have been discussed in the chapter on Catharsis. We consider, along with Louis Martz, that tragic experience is a spectrum which can accommodate not only **Hamlet, King Lear** and **Oedipus Rex,** but also **Antony and Cleopatra** and **Murder in the Cathedral**[54] and our hypothesis is that the tragic experience of Cilappatikaram is different from them not in kind but in degree. Morris Weitz says: "Wittgenstein showed that it is a condition of our intelligent, correct employment of language, that some of our terms do not, hence need not, have corresponding essences that guarantee their meaning".[55] "Knowing what tragedy is is not knowing a true theory of tragedy, but being able to cite indisputable examples and to decide on the basis of similarities and dissimilarities what

else is to count as a tragedy".[56] This comparative study has been undertaken spurred by our intuition that **Cilappatikāram** is a tragedy and it is hoped that the present study, among other things, will confirm this intuition.

This creates another problem; can we pinpoint Shakespearean tragedies and do they have common characteristics? A.C.Bradley in his **Shakespearean Tragedy** concentrated on the four 'pure tragedies' **(Hamlet, Othello, King Lear** and **Macbeth)** and he excluded **Antony and Cleopatra** in that study and he also believed that the four tragedies shared certain common features. Kenneth Muir takes quite a different view and says that there is no Shakespearean tragedy, there are only Shakespearean tragedies.[57] If Bradley's monism needs some correction, Kenneth Muir's pluralism would make generalisations completely impossible. We believe that a reconciliation of the two positions is possible -- if no two tragedies are completely identical, it is not impossible to see Shakespearean tragedy as a unity in diversity. L.C.Knights would also say that each play is a 'new beginning', 'a fresh raid on the inarticulate' for although there is development there is no repetition.[58] Yes; there is development and there is also consistency and when we study them together we have to bear this in mind. We have discussed Ilango in relation to **Romeo and Juliet, Julius Caesar, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth** and **Antony and Cleopatra.** It is more or less Bradley's pattern--because he himself referred to **Romeo and Juliet,** and **Julius Caesar** in his generalisations. Of course his discussion of **Antony and Cleopatra** in **Oxford Lectures on Poetry** differentiates it from other Shakespearean tragedies[59], but most of the modern critics would consider it as representative of a later phase in the tragic period, of course pointing to the final period, but still within the spectrum of Shakespearean tragedy. And we thought that this transitional nature itself would justify its inclusion. **Coriolanus** is more of a Roman play and as regards the tragic concept it has nothing to offer which we do not find in the others.

But even this is a formidable list and it has raised methodological difficulties because in Ilango we have only one text. So we have not multiplied examples from all the plays unless they were strictly necessary; when there is development in Shakespeare's art and vision we have indicated that and specified to which stage Ilango shows affinity. And it was interesting to note that there were parallel **developments** within **Cilappatikāram** itself and also that it showed more affinities with **King Lear** and **Antony and Cleopatra** and when it showed parallels with the earlier plays, mostly those

were features which were modified but not fundamentally in the later plays.

Wherever possible we have reduced the Shakespearean variety to a few patterns which can be related to the patterns in Ilango. For example, Shakespeare's tragic women have been reduced to two patterns, that of Cordelia and Cleopatra, and they have been compared with Kannaki and Madhavi respectively.

Of the four tragedies, **Othello** has been probably given the least consideration, because it was felt that it is the least "metaphysical" of them and its contribution to the development of the tragic idea is not very significant. **King Lear** has been given more importance, because we feel, with L.C.Knights, "**King Lear** is the great central masterpiece, the great exploratory allegory, to which the earlier plays lead and on which the later tragedies depend".[60]

Another difficulty of this kind is that we have been led to compare King Lear sometimes with Kovalan and sometimes with Kannaki and conversely Kannaki has been compared both with Cordelia and King Lear. This is inevitable as well as revealing because the tragic experience is not distributed in the same manner between the hero and the heroine in the two tragedians, and our concern is not with the hero or heroine but with the tragic experience of which they are the vessels. This is comparable to the linguist's problem (which is also a solution), when he discovers that the allophones of similar phonemes in two languages do not cover exactly the same area.

So, the general idea or the organising principle of the book has been their tragic concept and the different chapters explore the various aspects of this question. Because we believe that it is theme that determines the structure of a work of art, we have concentrated on the theme and the structural components are derived from them. In chapter II we have discussed man in relation to 'fate' and the sense of guilt within and that naturally led to discussion of man in relation to his milieu, the place of accidents and the place of villains in both the tragedians.

Complementary to this is the sense of a benign cosmic order which can be related to love within and this is the theme of Chapter III. If Chapter II concentrates on evil and Fate, Chapter III concentrates on love and other positive values and the benign cosmic order; so here we have the discussion of luck also. If the earlier chapter speaks of the

milieu and the rising action, chapter III gives more emphasis to the concluding part and the failing action and both are also related.

The discussion of love and positive values has actually necessitated a detailed consideration of the role of women in both and that is the subject of chapter IV, but here again our emphasis has been on their role in the tragic universe.

But the tragic universe includes another partner, however silent it may be, and that is nature. The dualism in the ethical substance as well as man is reflected in nature also. And because tragedy in its origin has been said to derive from nature myths and because we are searching for universals and they can be found more easily in those 'primitive' aspects we have attempted a study of man in relation to nature in Chapter V.

Chapter VI tries to bring together all these thematic considerations and study their aesthetic impact, which naturally means a study of catharsis in both. This has called for a consideration of the nature and the status of the tragic protagonists, a study of choric characters which magnify and distance the emotions, and also the reconciliation or synthesis of terror and love in the cosmic order, in the tragic sufferers and finally in the readers or the audience. The last point has led us to compare, however briefly, the Western concept of purgation with the Eastern concept of Rasa. The differences in the emotional impact have also been seen as reconcilable with the genre of **Cilappatikāram** and Shakespeare's tragedies.

In the final Chapter an attempt has been made to recapitulate the most significant points already discussed as well as synthesise them.

Lastly, we would like to mention briefly some of the major contributions that have already been made on the subject. Paradoxically enough so much and so little has been done in this field and hence only a very brief account alone is possible. So much has been done on Shakespeare and to review Shakespeare criticism in an introduction to a book is humanly impossible -- and for our purpose not necessary as well. In the course of the book important references to Shakespeare criticism have been made wherever necessary. Even confining ourselves to comparative criticism on Shakespeare would not reduce our problems, because almost every other critic on Shakespeare has suggested parallels with some poet or other. Just as each age has reinterpreted

Shakespeare in its own way and has been happy to see its image in Shakespeare, each culture has found its own significance in Shakespeare and the spiritual affinity with Shakespeare has been considered as a mark of culture. Dryden himself attempted only comparative criticism and others have compared him with the Ancients, Dante, Ariosto, Racine and Dostoevski, to mention only a few. Of these, Auerbach's comparison of Shakespeare with Cervantes in **Mimesis,** Kitto's comparison with Sophocles and Aeschylus in **Form and Meaning,** Bowra's comparison with Sophoclean Tragedy and Fergusson's placing Shakespeare in the unity of the European theatre since Dante have been most useful as well as provocative.

But we are more concerned with Shakespeare and Ilango, and only very little has been done in this specific field. Shakespeare has been compared with Kalidasa -- among others by Aurobindo who has made some very perceptive remarks on both.[61] Dr.A.Chidambaranathan Chettiar,[62] Dr.M.Varadarajan,[63] Dr.V.SP.Manickam,[64] and M.P.Sivagnanam,[65] have given very valuable insights on **Cilappatikāram,** but their approach has not been consciously comparative. Dr.Gnanamurthy[66] and Prof.Gurusamy[67] have referred to the tragic elements in **Cilappatikāram,** but they have not attempted any comparative study between Shakespeare and Ilango. Dr. Sachidanandan[68] and Dr. Ramakrishnan[69] have made useful comparative studies but their focus was on Whitman and Bharati, and Milton and Kamban respectively. Dr.Ramakrishnan has also made a critical study of Ilango[70] but there he makes only incidental comparisons with Shakespeare. Justice Maharajan has translated some of the works of Shakespeare into Tamil and also compared, though not elaborately, Shakespeare with Kamban.[71]

But the most pioneering work was done in this field by Margabandhu Sarma and Dr.T.P.Meenakshisundaranar. Mr.Margabandhu Sarma has acknowledged his debt to Bradley and he has attempted in his **Cilambin Iracanai** and other books a study of **Cilappatikāram** in the light of Bradley's interpretation of Shakespearean tragedy.[72] But he has concentrated on the structure and images, eventhough he has referred to the fact that the concept of Karma need not be alien to tragic sense. But he has not given enough evidence to prove that; nor has he compared this with the concept of Original Sin and again whatever comparison is made, it is only incidental to his purpose, which was not to compare Ilango and Shakespeare but to study Ilango in the light of Western aesthetics.

Dr.T.P.Meenakshisundaranar has made a most significant

contribution not only with reference to the complexity of its genre, but he has also referred to the tragic emotions kindled by Ilango.[73] But his point of reference is more Aristotle than Shakespeare and his primary concern again has been only Ilango. But they have all raised interesting problems and have made the field worth and fit for further explorations. That is why, with humility and gratitude to all those great minds, this humble task has been undertaken.

CHAPTER II

THE WEB OF GUILT AND FATE

The great tragedians of the world do not try to solve the riddle of existence; they only search for a pattern behind it. They discover certain laws operating in the universe and these laws are as important as the physical laws of the scientist's universe. Whitehead's reference to the Greek tragedians as the first scientific thinkers and his equating the tragic progress of events with the inevitability of scientific thought is only an exaggeration of truth.[1] The tragedians are puzzled by the mystery of evil in the universe and their main concern is to reconcile this with a world order which appears to be moral otherwise. But this depends on the question of freedom of the human agents. One cannot study the relationship between deeds and consequences (punishments or rewards) unless one is sure of the ratio between personal responsibility and other factors in human action. Normally it is contended that Shakespeare's characters are fully responsible agents responding to a milieu here and now. Eventhough they have occasional glimpses of a life to come[2] or think about the unknown land from whose bournes no traveller has returned,[3] generally they are supposed to have neither past nor future beyond the bank and shoal of time.[4] But Ilango's characters are supposed to be overridden by an unknown past and become puppets in the hands of an inexorable fate and their acts here and now are supposed to have nothing to do with their will. In this Chapter it is proposed to examine this position carefully and see the ratio between man's guilt and fate in the two tragedians.

Let us begin with a study of the milieu of a few Shakespearean tragedies. They all begin with a milieu which is already corrupt. **Romeo and Juliet** begins with a relatively calm atmosphere, but soon develops into a broil which signifies the psychological milieu of the play. The love of Romeo and Juliet evolves out of this background but it is inseparable from this evil atmosphere. Romeo's killing Tybalt involves him in this guilty universe.

In **Julius Caesar** again the corrupt social milieu precedes the entry of Caesar and Brutus. The corruption in the social order is emphasised and Brutus is seen as part of a corrupt social fabric. **Hamlet** begins with a more powerful sense of evil and the rottenness of Denmark is symbolised in the corrupt court of Claudius. Hamlet emerges brooding over it, but he is also a part of it. The crimes of Claudius and Gertrude have already upset the moral structure of the body politic and parallel to that we have Hamlet's sense of guilt for being the son of his mother. He feels that he is involved in a guilty universe against his will. The sense of doom is enhanced by the ghost's command, but when he responds to it he involves himself in the guilty universe.

In fact Shakespeare could have begun **Othello** like **Cilappatikāram** either with Othello's wooing of Desdemona or at least with the elopement, but significantly he begins with the Iago-Roderigo alliance, and the Othello-Desdemona harmony is relegated to the background. This corruption finds its completion in the corruption of Othello by Iago. The evil seen as the motiveless malignity of Iago is an inexplicable fact of the universe and we can see in this an intensification of the evil embodied in the hatred of families in **Romeo and Juliet.**

King Lear begins with a quiet dialogue followed by a ritualistic court out of which the tragic conflict emerges suddenly; the fact that the milieu is already corrupt is indicated in Gloucester's initial remarks.[5] We are made to feel that we are in a world where treachery and filial ingratitude are already in the air[6] and Lear emerges out of this background. His initial attraction towards his evil daughters symbolises his rapport with this guilty universe. The initial act of Lear seems to be a ripening of this corrupt condition and it not only mirrors but also intensifies this condition. Unlike the earlier plays, here we find the hero also already fully corrupt. Evil is already established both in the milieu and in the mind of the protagonist. The reference of the evil sisters to Lear's rashness in the past, after the act is over, is significant.[7]

In **Macbeth,** again, not only the witches symbolise a transcendental evil; there is also the evil in the society symbolised in the treachery of the thane of Cawdor out of which Macbeth emerges and his involvement in that evil is more than explicit.[8] The pattern of equivocation suggested by the witches is continued in Macbeth's initial statement and it is elaborated in the reporting of the treachery of the thane of Cawdor. The universal battle is further specified in and after Macbeth's encounter with the witches. The end of the story of the Cawdor treachery is the beginning of Macbeth's treachery and the battle begins in the mind of Macbeth.

On the other hand Ilango begins his work proper in a stable present linked with a steady past without any obvious premonition of a tragic future. **Cilappatikāram** begins with **Mankala Vāḻttuk Kātai** in which the human situation seems to evolve quietly from the macrocosm and the marriage of Kovalan and Kannaki comes as the culmination of the description of the milieu. But this is only the beginning of the beginning and it is also continued in the next **(Manai Aram Paṭutta)** Kātai which gives a detailed presentation of their domestic bliss by elaborating one timeless moment into a dramatic lyric. The beginning of the plot is continued and completed only in the next **(Arankērru)** Katai, which is parallel to the first because it gives the detailed presentation of another ritual, now the dance performance of Madhavi. Just as Kannaki was blessed by others,[9] now Madhavi is praised for her artistic excellence[10] and thus the two opposing forces are juxtaposed. And this is followed by Kovalan's sudden purchasing of the garland and the equally sudden act of Kovalan leaving Kannaki for Madhavi.

Superficially the milieu of **Cilappatikāram** seems to be completely different from that of the tragedies of Shakespeare. Differences there are. The beginning of Shakespearean tragedies is more Aristotelian because there in the beginning itself we find a situation pregnant with tragic potentialities. In Shakespearean beginning there is a past hinging upon the present, and the present is suggestive of the future. The past is interwoven with the present and the situation can be described as a present coloured by a hovering past and suggesting a looming future. In Ilango on the other hand both the background and the past have a remoteness and a steadiness which we do not find in Shakespeare. The social milieu is ripe with evil both in Pukar and Madurai and in a slightly different sense in Vanci also, but Ilango's art is so suggestive that it is easy to ignore it. Of course, Ilango is true to the ageless tradition of the Tamil poets who want

to begin with a beginning in a state of perfect poise. But the seeds of disruption are already there both in the milieu and in the protagonist. There is a deadly normalcy about the evil in the society. The fact that Kovalan can so easily ignore the domestic pieties is symptomatic of the deadly disease infecting the vitals of the social organism. There is as much rottenness here as in Hamlet's Denmark or Lear's England; it has reached a saturation point and is ready to be precipitated into tragedy but the only thing is that here it is not elaborated and the corruption in the milieu is presented after the introduction of the protagonists.

Not only Ilango does not emphasise the corruption of the milieu as Shakespeare does; his protagonist also appears to be less guilty. Kovalan's evil act in the earlier life is completely suppressed in the beginning, his initial act here and now is also described in such a way that it gives the impression that he is not guilty at all. Just as the evil in the milieu is not elaborated, the evil in his initial deed is also not emphasised and both are interrelated. And both together create the impression that Kovalan is forced by an external power.

Ilango reports the departure of Kovalan for Madhavi in just three lines:

Kovalan, buying the garland of Madhavi with
large flower-like eyes went along with Kuni
and entered the wedding abode[11]

Here is the moment of tragic choice, but Ilango does not elaborate or even indicate the reasons behind his choice. The departure seems to be abrupt particularly in view of the elaborate description of their domestic bliss in the earlier Katai. Does he want us to feel that there is no guilt on the part of Kovalan but that it is just the ripening of his deeds in his earlier birth and thereby the fulfilment of a law or a fate? But the reference to the earlier birth comes much later.[12] Ilango's objectivity is remarkable here, but the situation is also highly suggestive. A consummate artist that he is, he gives room for multiple interpretations, and a few have fallen into the trap by suggesting that the silence of Kannaki in the earlier Katai indicates her sexual sterility and that should have compelled Kovalan to leave her and go to Madhavi. But Ilango hastens to add that he had a very happy wedded life with her[13] and the final **Veṇpā** also speaks about their happiness.[14] But the sensuous simile in the Venpa is rather suggestive and significant. It compares the union of the two lovers to the embracing of two angry snakes. Obviously the simile is meant to bring out the intensity

of their union, but does not that suggest (however dimly) a union of incompatibles? This can be related to the initial description of the two in **Mankala Vāḻttuk Kātai** where both are introduced to us in two apparently symmetrical stanzas, but with differences at the deeper level. The superficial harmony does not blind us to the differences. She is described as the lover of great qualities worshipped and praised by women as having the spotless radiance of the Northern Star whereas Kovalan is described as the visible god of love praised by a group of women with words surpassing music in their sweetness.[15] The explicit association of Kannaki with the goddess of chastity is juxtaposed with the association of Kovalan with the god of love. Kannaki is worshipped as well as praised by women and significantly Kovalan is also praised by women. There is a rich ambiguity in the phrase, **"perunkuṇattuk Kātalāḷ"**[16] which can be said to mean that she was in love with great qualities as well as she was loved by great qualities. But Kovalan is credited only with the loving adoration of women. So, if it is ridiculous to say that Kannaki's silence implies sexual sterility one cannot help feeling that the harmony hides germs of difference not in terms of sex, but with reference to their calibre and values. The irony in the blessing of the couple by the elders is also significant from this point of view.[17] There is also an implied contrast between his concern with sex[18] and her concern with higher obligations as a wife.[19] Therefore we can say that the suddenness in the act does not simply demonstrate the working of a fate, even though it is also there. Time ripens things before which human motivations do not seem to be worth analysis, but that does not mean that they are not guilty or responsible for these acts. It is significant that Ilango himself does not refer to the ripening of his crime in earlier birth at this point, as he does when he later leaves Madhavi.[20] This question has been raised by Margabandhu Sarma and it has been argued that Ilango brings in fate whenever he is unable to explain anything.[21] Does this mean that Kovalan's leaving Kannaki is convincing and natural? If so, in such a man, leaving Madhavi later is also equally natural and there is inner consistency in the evolution of his character. So the fact remains that in both the contexts, the actions are sudden but Ilango refers to the ripening of fate only later. It is quite possible that Ilango wants to make Kovalan responsible for the initial act in naturalistic terms and he wants to associate it with fate only **after** that impression has been built. There is an element of mystery in the operation of the human will and the haste emphasises and enhances that, but that does not deny responsibility to the human agents. Eventhough Kovalan is not as fully affected in his

act as the hero in Shakespearean tragedy, Ilango also makes the act more natural by his earlier suggestion of Kannaki's possible incompatiblity with Kovalan, his description of the artistic excellence of Madhavi and also the social structure in which such things are common. He resembles the Greek tragedians in this respect, in whom also actions seem to spring suddenly from the bed-rock of personality. Kitto while comparing **Hamlet** with Greek tragedies has said that Hamlet's character is more fully affected by and revealed in his actions than in his Greek counterparts and then he generalises that "Greek tragedy presents sudden and complete disaster, or one disaster linked to another in linear fashion, while Shakespearean tragedy presents the complexive, menacing spread of ruin; and....at least one explanation of this is that the Greek poets thought of the tragic error as the breaking of a divine law (or sometimes in Aeschylus, as the breaking down of a temporary divine law) while Shakespeare saw it as an evil quality which, once it has broken loose, will feed on itself and on anything else that it can find until it reaches its end.[22] Geoffrey Brerton makes a similar statement: "One can perhaps sum up the distinction by saying that in Greek tragedy the principal stress is on moral issues as defined by the actions of characters; in Shakespearean tragedy the characters do not so much define the issues as contribute to their creation."[23] Hegel also makes this distinction between ancient and modern tragedies.[24] It is true that Greek tragedies and **Cilappatikāram** are more concerned with moral issues than psychic motivations[25] and the actions are sudden, but is it true that the deeds of the characters are not expressive of their characters at all?

Even in Shakespeare we find a surprising similarity to this in the crucial acts of Romeo, Hamlet, King Lear and Antony. Romeo has the impulsiveness of Kovalan which is revealed in his sudden transfer of affections to Juliet and the equally sudden killing of Tybalt. Is Romeo responsible and guilty in this act? The sudden development of the quarrel which results in Romeo's killing of Tybalt against his will makes us feel that here a malicious fate is trapping him and it is significant that he also refers to his being a Fortune's fool at that moment. It is true that Romeo is caught in a world shaped by the elders' hatred and that evil is ripening. But there is no question of hereditary evil in the sense that a curse haunts the characters from generation to generation.[26] But there is more of the Greek concept in this play in so far as the sins of the parents visit upon the children. But that has been worked into the character of Romeo also, because the act is the product of his rashness as well as the milieu, or better still, the act was possible because of his rashness in that milieu and that juxtaposition is tragic.

In **Julius Caesar** we start with the guilt of Caesar in murdering Pompey which is repeated in Brutus's murder of Caesar. We have Caesar's hubris in his refusal to accept his mortality and the hasty rushing to his doom. We have Brutus's hubris in his refusal to accept his fallibility and his becoming guilty in punishing the guilt of others. The Nemesis of Caesar works through Brutus whereby the latter invokes his own Nemesis. The first thing that strikes us in this pattern is that Shakespeare is here concerened with neither Brutus nor Caesar, but the universal human condition in which every one is guilty and this has been the cause of the controversy over the real hero of the play. Caesar and Brutus are complementary to each other. In one case we have the hubris of refusing to accept one's mortality, in the other we have the hubris of refusing to accept one's fallibility. In the case of Caesar, the tragedy is that he died when he was so confident; in the case of Brutus the tragedy is not that he died, but that he became guilty. The corruption of Brutus in the purgation of Rome is tragic. Thus we find that Shakespeare's tragic concept is in a transition stage here; if Caesar is like the classical hero, Brutus and his inwardness and getting corrupted point towards the typical Shakespearean tragic hero.

There is something similarly inexplicable in Hamlet's actions. Revenge is forced upon him by the ghost but the supernatural soliciting is preceded by his inner promptings and his revulsion at the loathsomeness of the corrupt world. Again he feels that he has inherited the guilt of his mother and that influence is made more naturalistic and his inaction is related to his character but again shaped and influenced by factors without. His killing of Polonius can be compared to the initial acts of Romeo and Kovalan. There is the same haste here and Hamlet sees the hand of heaven in it.[27] His desire for vengeance has involved him in unnecessary guilt. This crime could not have been committed, but for the conspiracy of circumstances, and it is tragic that it should have happened like that, but the fact remains that Hamlet had **decided to kill** someone and to that extent Hamlet was responsible for the act, and that is the real tragedy. In fact Kitto sees the working out of Dike in the tragedy of Hamlet.[28]
And Spurgeon also says: "To Shakespeare's pictorial imagination, the problem is not predominantly that of will and reason, of a mind too philosophic or a nature temperamentally unfitted to act quickly; he sees it pictorially not as the problem of an individual at all; but something greater and even mysterious, a condition for which the individual himself is not apparently responsible any more than the sick man is to blame for the infection which strikes and devours him, but

which nevertheless, in the course and development, impartially and relentlessly annihilates him and others innocent and guilty alike . . . this is the tragedy of Hamlet, as it is perhaps the chief tragic mystery of life".[29] Of course, we find Cleopatra referring to a similar idea when she says "Some innocents escape not the thunderbolt".[30] But eventhough she refers to an impersonal law, paradoxically that is later in the same passage, related to her own human will. In **Cilappatikāram** also it is Neeli's curse that works as Dike which again works through characteristic deeds of the human agents.

There is certainly a universal impersonal law operating in the ruthless logic of events which catches them all; but the emphasis is on the universal corruption and the susceptibility to evil which is symbolised in Hamlet. The play abounds in so many parallelisms both in situation and character for this purpose. Others have referred to the parallelism in the play, but they have emphasised their importance for the light they throw on Hamlet's character. Kitto refers to the spreading of evil;[31] but it would be more accurate to say that they make the Hamlet situation universal and they make him implicate in a universal guilt.

A comparison of the Hamlet situation with that of Orestes is illuminating. When Clytemnestra threatens Orestes with the pursuit of Erinyes if he kills her, Orestes replies that if he does not kill her, his father's Erinyes will pursue him;[32] Hamlet also feels that both obeying the ghost and inaction implicate him in guilt. To act is to be guilty; not to act is not to exist; therefore existence itself is guilty. The situations are similar, but their interpretations, though similar are not identical. Orestes is an avenger pure and simple, and his character is not as fully affected by the situation as Hamlet's is. In the Greek tragedy, according to Jones, the house is invested with a murky, incompletely comprehended web of religio-legal culpability and the chain reaction of crime and fresh crime recedes into a totally obscure past. Here we have a sin-begotten and sin-begetting action in which the individual threads lose themselves in the whole family guilt, collective and inherited.[33] In Shakespeare, the situation which Hamlet finds here and now makes him guilty and there is a greater responsiveness of his own character also to that universal guilt. The importance given to the continuation of guilt from the past is reduced in Shakespeare but there is a collective sense of guilt here and now. This may be due to the two different views of time and history--the Greek view of time being cyclical and the Christian view as linear and symbolic because of the interpenetration of god in the situation here and now.

We can note in this connection that Hamlet refers to the cursed spite,[34] but he is referring to the human situation as a curse, and not to any particular curse. There are curses in **Othello, Romeo and Juliet** and in **King Lear** also.[35] But they are also concerned with one birth. Ilango seems to be nearer to the Greek pattern, particularly that of Aeschylus in whom also an ancient curse seems to cause the tragedy, Neeli's curse haunts the families of Kovalan and Kannaki and the Kannaki situation repeats Neeli's as in **The Orestia,** but there is a difference in the sense that the cycle comes to an end quickly and here equal importance is given to the parallelism between Kannaki and Kopperundevi here and now. Kannaki also curses,[36] but it is a curse with a difference and she is able to overcome that fury and the cycle comes to an end because of the birth of love and she also evolves into a higher power. And here we find a cyclical view being replaced by a progressive view.

When we come to Lear's initial act and Antony's leaving Rome for Egypt, the parallel with the Kovalan situation is more striking. Margabandhu Sarma has referred to the similarity in the haste with which Shakespeare makes Lear reject Cordelia, and Ilango's description of the marriage of Kovalan and Kannaki.[37] But the real point of comparison is Kovalan's going to Madhavi and Lear's choice of the evil daughters. There is no implication of parallelism in the characters of Madhavi and Lear's evil daughters, but there is a parallel in the way in which the choice is made. Does Lear's haste in rejecting Cordelia suggest the working of a fate beyond his control? Or is it the ripening of the evil in the milieu? Or is it just the wilful assertion of the diseased will? It is primarily the last, but even when it is an expression of character, the suggestion of obeying an unknown force is always there. This is the central problem of humanity. Our freedom is also our restriction and, as Erich Auerbach says, in Shakespeare the sense of fate is more fully integrated with the milieu and the character.[38] In both **Cilappatikāram** and **King Lear** psychic roots of the initial act are not analysed and that intensifies the sense of fate, but they are not analysed because the corruption of the will is accepted as a mystery and its antecedents are not worth analysing and this again is akin to a sense of fate. There is inner consistency in the characters of Lear and Kovalan also in so far as both continue to be hasty. The similarity in the technique is also impressive: Shakespeare is becoming more mythopoeic and closer to the Eastern mind here and this is related to his vision at this stage. In all these respects there is a very close parallel between these two and the Ancient Mariner at the beginning, who too has been considered to be more acted upon.[39]

In **Antony and Cleopatra** too we have a similar situation handled in a similar way. Antony's leaving Octavia after the marriage also comes very suddenly without any conflict whatsoever. According to Granville-Barker, "No agony, nor darkening of the spirit before defeat, nor a Promethean defiance of the partial gods. The hero's fate is sealed quite casually in a talk with a soothsayer about dice and fighting cocks".[40] To Barker, the tyranny of the excessive appetite in Antony appears to be almost like an external fate coercing him. Fate is built into his character and his dialogue with the soothsayer is only a correlative to the listening to a mysterious command within. At this stage Shakespeare seems to be more alive to the mystery in the human choice and that is why he does not bother to analyse. The later heroes of Shakespeare are all already corrupt and what is the point in lingering upon it? There is a significant parallel in the technique of description also. Just as Kovalan's sudden act is preceded only by a detailed description of Madhavi's artistic excellence after the significantly conventional description of the wedded life of Kovalan and Kannaki, Antony's leaving Octavia is preceded by the elaborate description of the vision of Cleopatra on the Cydnus after the rather political decision on the part of Octavius to sell his sister to Antony. Rosen has referred to the fact that the orchestration of events is more significant than psychic analysis in **Antony and Cleopatra.**[41] This brings Shakespeare closer to Ilango in technique also at this stage. But here again, if there is a sense of fate or external coercion, it is more fully related to his character and he feels helpless before the tyranny of the corrupted will. So we may conclude that both Shakespeare and Ilango are puzzled by the mystery of the will. There is an element of freedom and compulsion in both, possibly more of freedom in Shakespeare. But there is the feeling of compulsion in Shakespeare also but it is more related to character.

So it may not be wrong to say that the sense of guilt in Shakespeare is parallel to the sense of the fate in Ilango. But they are not mutually exclusive. In Shakespeare the sense of guilt is accompanied by or results in a sense of fate. In **Hamlet** and **Macbeth** it is most obvious, particularly in the latter play. Macbeth feels that he has been tied to a stake, but it is only the inexorable moral order that is closing upon him. And in fact he initiated the process and whatever premonition is there is given reality or discovered only by him. It can be compared to the unconscious fulfilment of the oracle by Oedipus; but the difference here is that Macbeth has a consciousness of the doom from the beginning and all that he tries to avert it only implicates him further

in that. Time seems to run ahead and he is caught in an endless chain of crimes. But it is only due to the hardening of his heart and, if anything, he is only a prisoner of his own consciousness. In Kovalan also there is the fulfilment of an oracle, but he is less conscious of it than Macbeth. There is a vague consciousness of an earlier birth in him and others,[42] but there is no definite knowledge of the oracle as such and there is no question of their being deliberately affected by it. The possibility of having done an evil deed in the earlier birth is only a theoretical explanation, and not a source of their action. Nor does he know even dimly that he is going to die in Madurai. When he meets the goldsmith he encounters his destiny and we also feel that he is caught in a web for which he was responsible. He left for Madurai to escape his fate even though he did not know what it exactly was, but it was his fate that he should die in Madurai and he fulfilled it unwillingly. So here again we find Ilango's closer affinity with the Greek tragedians, particularly Sophocles in **Oedipus Rex.** But there is one difference. If Oedipus and Kovalan are less conscious of their doom than the Shakespearean hero, Oedipus is more aggressive than Kovalan because he himself seeks that fatal knowledge and rushes towards his doom, though unwillingly, and here he resembles Macbeth.

So it is obvious that there is a sense of being overtaken by something in both Macbeth and Kovalan also. Kovalan seems to be relatively passive, but he is also less conscious of the doom. Macbeth's violent running athwart the moral order makes him more impressive, but he is also more hopeless because of his growing consciousness of the doom. What emerges out of this is that in certain contexts the Christian concept of sin can be as fatalistic as the Indian concept of Karma, or the Greek view of Nemesis, but if they are rightly understood there is no pessimism in any of them. Macbeth was not bound to descend to darkness like that and the gates of Hell are not shut for ever. But Kovalan's lot seems to be more pathetic because he dies after repentance and reconciliation. But we have a similar thing in **King Lear** also. Cordelia is taken away after Lear's repentance and all that and the gods do not seem to listen to human prayers.[43] But that is the central fact of the human condition, because even gods are helpless before a moral law once it has been initiated. There is a feeling that fate can be mitigated or transcended by human effort or divine compassion, but it cannot be **averted** and it is moral as long as it is related to one's deeds.

That is why the pessimism of Macbeth, the hero, cannot

be equated with the spirit of the play. There is a ripening of his deeds and when he kills Macduff's children he is sharpening the sword of his own destiny. In **Hamlet** also we find that Claudius is forced to drink the poison he himself prepared and even in the case of the prince, Laertes's fury is only the ripening of Hamlet's deed. It is not a question of justice but necessity or inevitability. Time ripens things, and sometimes the development is unexpected, but it is not illogical. Tragedy only discovers a deeper logic in the scheme of things. In **Julius Caesar,** Brutus says:

> Our legions are brimful, our cause is ripe
> . . . .
> There is a tide in the affairs of men[44]

In **Macbeth** Malcolm says:

> . . . . .Macbeth
> Is ripe for shaking and the powers above
> Put on their instruments[45]

Macbeth abounds in images of growth, because it is concerned with the organic growth of evil, of evil begetting evil. In **Cilappatikāram** also there is a reference to "the time of the ripening of the deed".[46] In **Kolaikkaḷak kātai,** the **Veṇpā** at the end also refers to the deed 'which was the fruition of the ancient deed'.[47] The image suggests the inevitable and organic growth of the results of one's deeds and indicates the fact that the universe obeys certain moral laws which are as regular and as important as physical laws. We are not able to state them as precisely as the physical laws, but they can be felt.

The association of fate with time in both is significant. Time's movement is inexorable, as is fate's which is linked with it. And it is also significant that the reference to time is most conspicuous in **Romeo and Juliet** and **Macbeth** which are supposed to be fatalistic. In both the plays there is an attempt to pervert time, of course, in different ways. There is a sense of haste in both the plays, which signifies their rushing to the doom as well as their desire to transcend time. But time asserts itself at the end in both the plays. Time brings things to fruition as well as their decay and this dualism in the nature of time is suggestive of the dualism of the moral order. Its mechanical aspect can be related to the 'fatal' aspects of the moral order and the significant thing is that it is related to the human act. Macbeth tries to subject time to the human will, but he only subjects himself to it by his perverse act. He deprives it of its meaning and moral significance when he violates human pieties and

it looks as though time is groaning under the weight of his sin, but this is only **his** experience of time. He experiences hell as a universe devoid of the rhythms of change and growth symbolised in time movement. Life degenerates into a repetitive cycle without any rhythm because he has lost the human bend and only when he dies 'time is free.'[48] Of course, Shakespearean concern with time is more elaborate, but it is significant that both relate it to a moral order which is both mechanical and creative and also responds to the human acts.

Thus we find both in Shakespeare and Ilango the operation of an inexorable law which is related to, but independent of, the human act. Usually Shakespeare is supposed to have nothing to do with fate. Bradley among others has seen the fatalistic dimension, but he too minimises the element of mystery and compulsion; nor does he relate it to the sense of guilt. Ilango on the other hand has been considered to be completely fatalistic but the comparison shows that it is not so. In Kovaian's initial act also there is the assertion of the diseased will. The elements of mystery and compulsion are there in both, and they are also related to the human acts in both. The only difference is that in Shakespeare it is a sense of guilt here and now that is built into the characters' fate, whereas in Ilango it is also related to his deeds in the earlier birth, but they have affected his character here and now also. Christianity also postulates the mysterious corruption of the will and it is this mystery that is given a different form in the concept of Karma. So one's Karma is seen to develop into one's character which shapes one's destiny. Ilango seems to be more Greek, because in **Cilappatikāram** one gets the feeling that Nemesis simply happens however one may try to overcome it. Gilbert Murray has said that the theme of the Greek tragedies is that we try to overcome our Moira, but our Moira always overtakes us,[49] and this is exactly what Tiruvalluvar, who is very akin to Ilango in spirit says: "Are there things mightier than the scheme of things? Even when others surround it, it will overtake them."[50] And the **Patikam** of **Cilappatikāram** says that one of the three great truths which the epic proposes to illustrate and establish is:

> One's deeds in the past will recoil upon
> the doer on ripe occasions.[51]

And the difference between Tiruvalluvar and Ilango is also significant: Tiruvalluvar refers to **ul** as a universal order or frame of things, where as in Ilango it becomes **ulvinai** which means the deed of one's past which is part of an order

On other occasions Ilango refers to **valvinai**[53] and **tīvinai**[54] also but the priority is given to **valvinai** and **ūlvinai.** In **Tirukkuraḷ** we have both **ul** and **vinai** separately, but we do not have this compound. **Ūlvinai** can be related to "Dike" -- a universal law or pattern; **Vinai** can be related to Moira-- one's deed or portion. It is quite possible that **ūlvinai** is a later concept in which the universal order is related to one's personal deeds and still later, we find the word **vinai** acquiring the significance of fate itself and ousting the other word and finally denoting one's malicious fate only. We find a similar process in the development of meaning in the words **viti** and **karumam** which have also undergone a similar degradation. The word **viti** which had originally meant a law later got the meaning of one's bad lot. Prof.Toynbee has commented upon the Sanskrit word '**Karma**' which literally means just action that it has later been restricted to the special meaning of moral action, flowing from deliberate act of will, which produces an abiding effect upon the character of the agent and this mounts up cumulatively, in an ever-open debit and credit account, from one re-incarnation to another.[55] And, at a later stage this word denoted only one's evil Karma. And, in the degeneration of the meaning of these words, one can see the entire cultural history of the people, and, in Bharati, we see an attempt to revitalise these words and there is no evil in **Karumam** or **viti** in his usage.[56]

But there is no fatalism either in Shakespeare or Ilango. Prof. Toynbee has referred to the similarities in the concepts of Original Sin and Karma and has argued that both the sense of sin and sense of fate can be healthy upto a point. A sense of sin could petrify into a fatalistic helplessness; a belief in Karma can lead to drift and irresponsibility and ultimately inaction: "Thus while **Karma** can be regarded in one aspect as a burden forcibly imposed by the inexorable working of the law of causation, there is an alternative light in which it can be viewed as a burden that is deliberately increased or diminished, assumed or thrown off, by acts which are all within the scope of the agent's own volition. When viewed under this aspect, **Karma** presents itself as the work of the soul (or bundle of psychoses) that is its subject, and no longer as the work of a Destiny external to the subject and unamenable to his (or its) control: and under this aspect **Karma** resolves itself into Sin instead of Fate".[57] Ilango's concept is akin to this--his compound '**ūlvinai**' gives priority to one's deeds which become the law. And his technique of referring to **ūl** only as his explanation after the deed is done and also the fact that Kannaki comes to know of the oracle only when everything is over, only confirm this. This is parallel to the Christian concept which

postulates an infectious primal sin which was committed by Adam and which must therefore **ex hypothesi** be impervious to the human action of any human being except Adam himself--and also the personal sin of the particular soul that is now striving to win release.[58] Toynbee adds: "This personal sin may be traceable, sub specie theological to an innate disposition towards conscupiscence which is Adam's untoward legacy to everyone of his descendents; but a predisposition is not tantamount to a predetermination, nor a temptation to a fall".[59]

Macbeth and **Cilappatikāram** bring out these similarities and differences most clearly. Kovalan seems to be more passive, but the limiting of freedom is there in both in different ways: "While the chain of acts that generates **Karma** is a chain of cause and effect, the acts themselves are all of them deliberate acts of volition."[60] There is a growing sense of helplessness both in Macbeth and Kovalan but all the time they are creating their own Nemesis. Both seem to be surprised by their fate when it overtakes them but it is characteristic of reality to surprise.[61] But is there not a greater degree of surprise in the tragedy of Kovalan and can it be attributed to the fatalism of Ilango?

Aristotle would be a good point of departure. He has said that the events in a tragedy must be probable and necessary- "incidents (which) occur unexpectedly and at the same time in consequence of one another."[62] Charlton says that this does not simply refer to the nexus of events in sequence; "...'even in Aritotle the word cannot divest itself of implications from a more primitive apprehension of reality. 'Necessity' is a name for something felt to be an ultimate compulsion, a power ordaining inevitably the sequence of what becomes. As Aristotle uses it, it is a scientific or a metaphysical term for that ultima-ratio of tragedy which in a more theological terminology of other epochs may be thought of as 'fate' or destiny'".[63] Based on this, Lawlor makes a distinction between what is probable and necessary: "Tragic experience is characterised both by a sense of logic, of true relationship between what we are and what befalls us, the 'probable' and also by the recognition of that which is unexpected, but is nevertheless seen to be 'necessary'. This tension between necessary and probable is essential to the tragic experience; the activity of each drama may be said to be, at any given point, an oscillation between these mighty poles. It will of course be evident that there are thus twin pitfalls for the dramatist. The connexion between what we are and what befalls us cannot be merely mechanistic, a cause-effect, act-consequence relationship

without ceasing to be mysterious. Equally, it cannot be truly mysterious if it is merely inscrutable; for it will then be felt as arbitrary or even capricious. Clearly, this is the heart of tragic mystery."[64]

This combination of the probable and necessary is there in both Shakespeare and Ilango in different ways. There is a blending of mystery and rationale, of a universal compulsion and an inner compulsion in the events in both. The way in which Kovalan meets with his death has given rise to the view that, in **Cilappatikāram,** we have more of accidents and therefore it is more fatalistic. The fact that Kovalan with one anklet should meet the goldsmith, of all people, who also needed one, seems to be a cruel conspiracy of fate, but it is not improbable. The juxtaposition is tragic, because Kovalan seems to create his own doom, but it can be related to his character as well. Kovalan's decision to take one anklet and his enquiry with the goldsmith are natural and probable. It is also natural that he is unable to smell the evil in the goldsmith. There is a sense of his being caught by fate unawares; but he has been moving towards it by his own deeds here and now. The incidents recall his buying the garland of Madhavi in the beginning which was responsible for the sufferings of Kannaki and therefore there is some justice in his being caught also. The tragic fact is that the doer must suffer even though there is no direct proportion between the deed and the punishment and Nemesis takes its own shape and chooses its own place also. So his being caught like this is both 'logical' and 'necessary', the product of character and fate, both just and unjust. That is why it inspires us with pity and terror. And this can be compared to Othello's encounter with Iago, of all people, but the difference is that if Iago also exploits the expansive trust of Othello, he ruins him slowly--there it is the corruption of the soul, not a brutal killing. And we have this accidental encountering also in Oedipus meeting the people on the road.

The sense of mystery is aggravated by the rapidity with which Kovalan is punished and put to death, and the rapidity is there in the later part of Shakespearean tragedies also, particularly in **Romeo and Juliet, Othello** and **Macbeth.** We cannot agree with Tirukoodasundaram Pillai who says that King Nedunchezhian's act should be entirely related to his infatuation.[65] Or is it just the ripening of the fate of Kovalan which involves the King in guilt unnecessarily? If the King is an instrument through whom Kovalan's fate works, it can be related to his character also and in a sense we find the ripening of the evil in Madurai of which his act is symbolic and that logically brings out the purgation of the land

also. There is also a deeper logic in the sensuous Kovalan being punished by the infatuated Nedunchezhian.

But the element of accident is most obvious in the fatal stroke of the drunkard's sword which falls on him so suddenly. There is a reference in Aristotle to a man being killed by the falling statue of the one he had murdered.[66] Commenting upon this, W.E.Macollon says "such an occurrence, says Aristotle approvingly, has an air of design. But although this kind of development can arouse a thrill of delighted horror, it is inadequately logical to serve as the climax of a great tragedy."[67] But can we equate Kovalan's situation with this? Certainly the emotion here is not that of delighted horror. A comparison with similar situations in Shakespeare will be illuminating. Even though there is something of the accidental in the death of all the tragic heroes in Shakespeare, the nearest parallel is found in the tragedy of Romeo and Othello, and above all, in the death of Cordelia.

Romeo and Juliet has been associated with 'tragedies' because of its 'fatalism' as revealed in the accumulation of accidents.[68] According to Lawlor "As far as the twin aspects of 'accident' and 'design' are concerned, there is not much doubt where the emphasis lies in **Romeo and Juliet**. Accident palpably plays the largest part; the treatment is decisively in terms of man as patient of destiny."[69] He, along with Charlton, thinks that the play embodies the medieval conception of tragedy, as against the Renaissance type with Nemesis as the convincing instrument of tragic inevitability because Fortune seems to be the presiding spirit of the play: "Throughout, accident has played the largest part deriving from the fundamental accident of Montague implacably opposed to Capulet. Necessity makes fortune swift; so, the tempo of the play is quick and images of haste and confusion abound."[70] The universe seems to symbolise their haste to the old Friar to whom "fleck'd darkness like a drunkard reels from day's path."[71] To quote Lawlor again "and, in the last act, we have the mounting haste that brings Romeo disastrously ahead of time, with the Friar pattering to forestall the train of events."[72]

This sense of haste is comparable with the speed with which Kovalan meets his death. That Romeo should arrive before Juliet's awaking from her potion is the last fatal accident. And the Catastrophe is the result of the accident. But as Lawlor has argued, the play is not less tragic because of this. There is no supernatural machine, but only time worn obstinacy which is in tragic juxtaposition with the lover's equally impetuous passion. There is a tragic excess

in their love which is fatal. And, like Kovalan, Romeo is also hasty and impulsive and here again there is a pattern. But there is also a difference in so far as Kovalan simply dies in the hands of the drunken hangman, whereas Romeo dies fighting.

In **Othello** this medieval concept of tragedy is being modified further but still the catastrophe in the long run is the outcome of an accident. The role of the handkerchief cannot be minimised, even though, it is related to Othello's jealousy and Iago's malignity. When all is said and done there is something inexplicable in the human predicament and the handkerchief is only a symbol of that inexplicable element. At another level, we see that unaccountable mystery in Iago's malignity also.

The way in which Cordelia dies only confirms this and this is the closest parallel to the Kovalan situation. When Lear is reconciled with Cordelia and there are suggestions of a new life emerging, Lear appears with dead Cordelia in his arms.[73] And this could have been averted and even Edmund's attempt to do good is not fulfilled. Many critics have felt that Cordelia could have been spared, but the interesting fact is that Shakespeare not only did not spare her, but made her die in this way. It makes the world order chaotic to a superficial observer, but it only enhances our sense of mystery and reveals a deeper logic in the scheme of things. In every tragic situation there is mystery as well as logic. Here, as well as in the sudden fall of the drunkard's knife in **Cilappatikāram**, we see the **mysterious** operation of an inexorable **law**, and there is both mystery and logic in both. Accidents do happen in life as well as in drama. The drunkard's life is only symbolic of the mechanical or impersonal aspect of the world order and that is only the last link in a great chain of events. We may say that the goldsmith and the drunkard represent the lowest ladder in the scheme of things and they represent the mechanical element which is part of a creative design. Possibly Shakespeare and Ilango wanted to enhance the sense of pity and terror by making us feel that the catastrophe could have been averted. In both the cases the victims' moral status is enhanced by this accidental death. In **King Lear**, the death of Cordelia seems to come from a flaw in the scheme of things; no one, including Edmund, would ultimately like to kill her. It seems as if, once the machine is operated upon by the human act, human contrivance cannot alter its course eventhough human love can accept and transcend it. In the case of Kovalan also, it looks as though no sane person would have liked to kill him, but Nemesis **had** to happen. But be-

cause there is a pattern in all this, it does not simply result in delighted horror. The fact that a man who had always been impulsive should die by an impulsive act of someone else reveals a deeper logic in the scheme of things and it is both necessary and probable. It is interesting to note that Shakespeare uses accident not only in an early play like **Romeo and Juliet**, but also in a mature tragedy, like **King Lear**, particularly when one feels it could have been avoided.

But if Ilango's concept of guilt does not take away the human responsibility and accidents can also be related to character, we cannot deny the underplaying of the sense of guilt in his characters compared to Shakespeare's. Ilango not only does not elaborate the evil in Kovalan, he has also not created any villain. Ilango takes extra pains to exonerate Pandiyan Nedunchezhiyan and the goldsmith is only a mechanism. This is not only Ilango's technique, but part of the Tamil tradition which does not linger upon evil. There is no place for villainy in earlier Sangam literature. Even today Tamil literature does not elaborate the corruption of the soul; even if there are villains, they are given an easy conversion or explanation. True to this tradition Ilango also does not relate the evil to the human malignity or villainy. To some extent this can be compared to the situation in Greek tragedies where also there is no human villainy, and Hegel is said to have referred to this feature in Greek tragedy.[74] One is reminded of Meredith's

> In tragic life, God wot
> No villain need be![75]

There is a greater consciousness of guilt in Greek tragedies than in Ilango but both Ilango and Greek tragedians seem to be agreed that at one level no one is guilty, but fate. In Shakespearean tragedy there is a greater emphasis upon human villainy. But in Shakespeare also, the villains are not generically different from others; in them there is only an intensification of one aspect of humanity. They differ only in degree from heroes, because there is reciprocity and even deeper identity between them and other characters. They represent a phase in evolution of the human soul when it has denied love to itself and is unable to grow. They are all intellectuals, but their major trouble is due to the fact that they are unable to respond to the harmony of love or music. There is the same perversion of will which we find in the later tragic heroes of Shakespeare, but intensified. Their main problem is isolation and they spread disintegration and ultimately they themselves disintegrate. Even their search for power is subordinated to, and springs from,

their inability to love and one of the most characteristic Shakespearean insights is this subordination of the power theme to personal problems and deeper animal appetites in man. Edmund is again archetypal--he represents inability to love and inability to respond to the rhythms of society. This probably is the deepest human malady--not money, not sex, not even fear as stipulated by Spurgeon.[76] Sex nausea is there in his villains and heroes. Probably both--their sex nausea and their inability to love--are only two aspects of the same condition. Even in the sonnets Shakespeare has suggested that sex sublimated into love awakens and strengthens one's moral sensibility. The villains from Richard III to Edmund suffer from the hell of "I am I" because of their inability to expand through love. This is also linked with an unalterable condition in their birth for which they are not responsible, a mole, a malformation, or as in the case of Edmund, being a bastard which only intensifies the mystery of evil. Kamban's Kooni could be cited as a parallel in Tamil Literature. Shakespeare here portrays a hardened condition of the human soul -- a condition of isolation and this is his version of damnation. Macbeth's hell is his isolation and denial of human pieties. Here again, Shakespeare humanises Dante in the sense that hell takes place here and now with reference to man's relationship with fellowmen. Ilango is also concerned with violation of human pieties -- but again the isolation and darkness are not emphasised. This may be due to the fact that according to the Indian view the soul can be never completely contaminated. Whether this is shallow idealism compared to the Western sense of evil cannot and need not be argued for our purpose.

If both the tragedians refer to a web of guilt and fate, we have more of the sense of guilt in Shakespeare and more of the sense of fate in Ilango. This results in Shakespeare's characters appearing to be mainly affected by deeds here and now, whereas in Ilango there is also a ripening of the deeds in the earlier birth. This can be related to the Christian concept of Sin and the Indian concept of Karma respectively. And this also results in Ilango's giving less importance to psychic analysis of characters in general and their evil in particular than in Shakespeare. And above all the tragic hero in the Western literature seems to be more self-conscious and what he is seeking is also a kind of self-knowledge, whereas in Ilango there is no such quest for self-knowledge. In this respect there is a closer affinity between Shakespeare and the Greek tragedians whereas in all the other aspects discussed in this book, Ilango seems to be closer to the Greek tragedians. This exception is also significant in the light of Cleanth Brooks' view that the common core of the Western tragedies is this search for knowledge.

CHAPTER III

THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE

The tragic destiny portrayed by Shakespeare and Ilango is certainly a web of fate and human guilt, but that does not mean that the world order can be simply equated with a mechanical or malicious law in either of them. The sense of a coercive world order is also countered by a sense of the operation of a benevolent force in the scheme of things in both and, just as fate can be related to human guilt in both, this intuition of a benevolent world order can be related to human love and this relationship will be the theme of this Chapter.

Bradley has referred to this dualism in the world order of Shakespeare. He says that the ultimate power in Shakespearean tragedies cannot be adequately described as fate, whether malicious and cruel, or blind and indifferent to human happiness and good.[1] He does not equate it with a benevolent order, or Providence either. But he sees it as a moral power self-divided, striving for perfection through self - waste.[2] Later critics have been overanxious to discover explicit Christian meanings in Shakespeare and that again has been questioned by recent critics. According to R.M.Frye, Bradley's position seems to be nearer to the experience of Shakespeare's plays than that of some later critics.[3]

Let us test the truth of these approaches with reference to the individual plays. **Romeo and Juliet,** the earliest of Shakespearean tragedies is itself an embodiment of this double awareness. If, on the one hand, the play appears to be fatalistic in its insistence on the power of inauspicious stars and fickle Fortune, there is also a sense of pattern akin to providential order in the play. If Charlton would

call it an experimental tragedy and Lawlor a 'tragedie' because of its emphasis on the power of Fortune,[4] Ribner sees in the play a demonstration of providential order.[5] It is true that Friar Lawrence symbolises the world of faith. The Friar sees the hand of Heaven in the (feigned) death of Juliet.

> Heaven and yourself
> Had part in this fair maid; now Heaven hath all,
> And all the better is for the maid.[6]

At the end the Prince refers to the punishment of Heaven

> See what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
> That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!
> And I, for winking at your discords too,
> Have lost a brace of kinsmen. All are punish'd .[7]

Certainly the world order is not a mechanical, but only a moral necessity, but it is far from being a providential scheme. The neat conclusion of the Prince is no conclusion at all, but only an approach towards that. What the play suggests is a mystery and we can see even in the cosmic consciousness a deep division between an impersonal law and the divine love. Possibly we can say with Bradley that the world order itself is evolving into a higher consciousness through strife.[8] What the play achieves is an artistic synthesis, not a philosophic resolution. The world order is mechanical as well as creative. Shakespeare simply exposes this mystery. This is reflected in the dualistic impression about the characters. At one level they seem to be passive instruments of fate, but they also seem to embody an appetite for life and they seem to be the vehicle of the **elan vital.** If a malicious fate seems to crush them at one level, it also vindicates the power of love to transcend it and in that sense **fate is also akin to love.** This strife is tragic, but it suggests an evolution as well as synthesis in **Romeo and Juliet.** We find no demonstration, but a dramatisation of this tension and in the triumphant love of Romeo and Juliet, we see the ushering in of a triumphant humanism and the modern secular consciousness.

We can find a parallel to this in **Cilappatikāram. Cilappatikāram** also has been a battleground for different philosophies of life. It was once considered to be fatalistic, but now it is described as the oracle of humanism as well as secularism in Tamil literature. The **Patikam** to the epic explicitly states that one of the aims of the work is to demonstrate the working of Dike, but the first aim is to show that Dharma **(Aram)** becomes death to those who deviate from uprightness in

politics. Fate seems to evolve into Dharma; eventhough at another level, fate seems to assert its power. But the more important parallel between **Romeo and Juliet** in particular and **Cilappatikāram** is the fact that in both the primal characters appear to be over-ridden by a cruel fate, but they also seem to be the vehicles of the evolutionary appetite of the cosmos--and this is most obvious in Kannaki. It is interesting to note that both Juliet and Kannaki do not speak of fate or Fortune as much as Romeo and Kovalan do.

Closely connected with this is the secular humanism of both as symbolised in the treatment of the Friar in **Romeo and Juliet** and Kavundhi Adikal in **Cilappatikāram.** The Friar's preaching seems to be colourless by the real, mighty passion of the lovers, and in **Cilappatikāram** we find Kavundhi's role being subordinated to Kannaki's. The anxiety of the Friar to help the lovers is comparable to that of Kavundhi to help Kovalan and Kannaki in their hour of distress. But just as the faith of Juliet is more convincing than the Friar's, we find Kannaki's spiritual strength to be more impressive than that of Kavundhi. Finally, the sorrow of the Friar over the tragic death of the lovers recalls the agony of Kavundhi over the tragedy of Kovalan and Kannaki and her consequent starving to death overwhelmed by the power of human love.[8] Thus in both we find the yielding of asceticism to a humanistic creed of love and this seems to be the core of the vision in both.

So the real tension in **Romeo and Juliet** is not between fate or Fortune on the one hand and Providence on the other but between the fickleness of Fortune and the transitoriness of the human glory on the one hand and the radiance and eternal fragrance of love on the other. The images of light, gunpowder and lightning which abound in the play only illustrate this dualism. According to Miss Spurgeon "the beauty and ardour of young love was the irradiating glory of sun-light and star-light in a dark world".[9] Kenneth Muir supplements this by saying that the gunpowder images symbolise the destructive effects of passion and the Montague - Capulet feud and he associates the star images with the astrological influences.[10] Light can also stand for spiritual illumination and this image is found in poems dealing with some sort of religious experience. But the most important thing is that it has a dual function. It stands for fate and love, explosion and radiance and their tragic juxtapositon. It brings out simultaneously the fatality of love as well as the radiance of love in its very transitoriness.

The very intensity of love suggests a tragic dissolution

but the very dissolution also intensifies its glory. Love, pure and radiant, is a kind of death, and if it perishes through its very intensity, it can display a glory which is deathless. The excess of joy of the lovers in their first meeting is inseparable from their intuition of transitoriness and this is implied in the image of lightning used by Juliet:

> I have no joy of this contract to-night;
> It is too rash, too unadvis'd, too sudden;
> Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
> Ere one can say 'It lightens'[11]

The lightning image brings out the power and the transient glory of human passion and it refers not only to the sudden-ness of meeting but her fear that it may not last, because of its very intensity. There is a feeling that intensity and duration are incompatible and time and fate will destroy their web of love. But this awareness of mortality is also followed by a deeper involvement in the experience and contentment with the richness of experience which enables them to defy time and death. If human love is fatal, that itself is the answer to fate, because that itself gives a sense of timelessness and thereby a liberation from the Wheel. Romeo says:

> It cannot countervail the exchange of joy
> That one short minute gives me in her sight.
> Do thou but close our hands with holy words,
> Then love-devouring death do what he dare;
> It is enough I may but call her mine.[12]

The Friar's reply emphasises the other side of the complex truth. In **Othello** the excess of joy is too much and he is afraid that it may not last long and it is Desdemona's faith that transcends that fear. In **Cilappatikāram** also, there is a similar intuition of the transitoriness of human joy in the midst of their ecstasy and this brings the humanity (cou-ple) closer and makes them experience the moment more intensely. The **Veṇpā** at the end of **Manai Aram Paṭutta Kātai** says: "They stood up to suck the very marrow out of the bone because they seem to have a perception of the transiency of our earthly joys".[13] Here is a tragic insight of fundamental importance which is also surprisingly similar to that of Shakespeare in **Romeo and Juliet** and **Othello.** Kovalan and Kannaki seem to have a sense of transitoriness at the peak of their joy, but that itself enhances the intensity of their love. If in **Romeo and Juliet** Shakespeare's answer to fate as embodied in human malignity is the mutuality of human passion, one of the ans-wers which **Cilappatikāram** suggests also is the same. Kannaki's pursuit of Kovalan beyond death demonstrates the power of love to transcend fate.

In **Hamlet** we see the next stage in the evolution of Shakespeare's mind and art in this respect. If there is a tension between a medieval view of fate (Fortune) and a humanistic concept of love in **Romeo and Juliet,** in **Hamlet** there is a tension between a Greek sense of doom and a Christian concept of love and charity and the latter is linked with a growing sense of Providence. In the beginning, Hamlet feels that he is doomed, but later that dissolves into a sense of Providence. Dover Wilson says that it is difficult to see whether he is an actor or an agent at the end and whether his remarks on the sparrow are fatalistic or expressive of a faith in a Providential order.[14] But later critics have referred to the discovery of a Providential order and that is related to his own identification with the pattern. A.S.P.Woodhouse has referred to the similarity between Hamlet and Samson in this respect. "Now the common factor in the action of **Hamlet** and **Samson Agonistes** is that each hero is moving, however hesitantly or unwillingly, towards the fulfilment of his task and (for they are conjoined) towards his own doom. Not that the task (Hamlet's execution of justice or Samson's service of God) necessarily of itself entails the destruction of the hero. It does so because of the hero's own conduct, because, that is of the interplay of free will and circumstances which together weave a web of necessity no less inexorable than that in which Oedipus is entangled. The heroes do not, like Oedipus in the **Tyrannus,** unconsciously run athwart the order of things; they do not, like Macbeth, defy the moral order or, like Edmund, call its mandate in question. On the contrary they perish at last in giving effect to it. They are on the side of the power, the overruling power which destroys them".[15] Hamlet, like Claudius, shapes his own Nemesis, but he gradually identifies himself with it and, if in one sense Hamlet is opposed to fate more than any one else, he is also closest to that power, and to say that the world order is alien to distinction is only a partial truth. If it needs Hamlet as a scourge, he also becomes its minister and he is thereby elevated. This is the great moment of recognition in Hamlet -- to know that he is both a scourge and a minister.[16] With this we also have the reversal in **Hamlet.** It is significant that the reversal in the tide of events follows the reversal in character.

His miraculous escape back to Denmark follows his insight into his own guilt and an awareness of his being an instrument of a higher purpose. In the graveyard Hamlet is reborn and as Niegel Alexander has pointed out he attains a new synthesis of personality by reconciling his passion with the fact of death: "Only in the graveyard does Hamlet recognise his love for Ophelia -- a passion that is proclaimed

in defiance of memory and understanding since it is an expression of love for a now senseless corpse. Only once he has embraced that. Passionate life of human love is Hamlet's union of the active, contemplative and passionate lives complete".[17] There is a gushing of humanity when there is an awareness and acceptance of mortality. Here is also a discovery of human bonds and a sense of oneness in the common fact of death. The power of human love cries out from the ashes and "this perpetual search for the harmony of love even at the edge of a grave in the murderous conditions of Elsinore makes life both heroic and tragic."

It is only after this that Hamlet identifies himself fully with the creative centre, and then only he acts. Here there is an illusion of his being bound but while obeying a deeper impulse in himself he is also acting as a free agent. Maynard Mack refers to the "new" Hamlet of Act V. "It is a matter of Hamlet's whole deportment....the deportment of aman who has been 'illuminated' in the tragic sense. . . . The point is not that Hamlet has suddenly become religious; he has been religious all through the play. The point is that he has now learned and accepted, the boundaries in which the human action, human judgement are enclosed."[18] With the greater illumination there is also greater identification with the centre from now onwards and to that extent he is fully 'free'. Here is the paradox of the tragic destiny of man -- the sense of doom itself melts into a sense of Providence; accident becomes chance and Hamlet the patient becomes Hamlet the agent and this reversal is due to an inner change -- to a growing sense of detachment, humility and charity, the manifestations of love.

The analysis of the imagery of play and duel in **Hamlet** by Niegel Alexander confirms this view. Role-playing is a leading theme in the play--it is a means to the discovery of one's reality. Both Hamlet and Claudius 'play' roles; and later Hamlet and Laertes 'play' roles but Hamlet discovers his identity by really 'playing' the role, that is fulfilling his role with the detachment of a player. There is also involvement, but it is the result of detachment. A soldier also is a player and a soldier discovers his identity in detachment. It is significant that in the final scene both the images merge and Hamlet is both a soldier and a player. He discovers his true identity in the final detachment and in that sense he really acts. Dr.Reid confirms this when he says that "Hamlet's mood throughout Act V is marked by a strange and beautiful detachment from the very acts he performs and witnesses, a sort of spectatorship or connoisseurship of life as drama.[19] Horatio and Fortinbras are parallel to

Hamlet in this respect. Horatio has already arrived at this spiritual equilibrium. Fortinbras too has identified himself with a cause and that total identification is also a kind of detachment. They are complementary to each other. If one represents right detachment, the other represents right involvement and they are almost one. In a sense Horatio is a good player in the game of life, because of his detachment; Fortinbras is a good soldier and both are alike. That is why Hamlet ultimately wants both of them to survive. They have been away from the Wheel. one at the personal level and the other at the political level.

If they escape the Wheel, Hamlet also transcends it and dies as a true soldier. C.S.Lewis has referred to the significance of the soldiers' rites given to Hamlet at the end[20] and Helen Gardner has also brought out the significance very clearly by comparing the beginning and the end of the play. "The initial scene suggested the symbol of the soldier on the guard who cannot leave his post until he is relieved or given permission from above and this can be related to the predicament of Hamlet who cannot give up the battle of life. He is the quintessential European man who holds that man is ordained to govern the world according to equity and righteousness and not to renounce the world and leave it to corruption."[21]

The interesting factor is that the solution of **Hamlet** is so close to that of the Bhagavat **Gita.** Hamlet's going to the duel is like Arjuna's fight with his kinsmen. Hamlet realises that if life is a battle we cannot escape fighting there; but we can escape guilt by fighting with detachment. Where there is detachment there is no guilt. In the **Gita** also, Lord Krishna asks Arjuna to fight and says that when he does it for Krishna or when he thinks that Krishna does it **through him** (and they are not different) there is no guilt. The action is Krishna's and the 'guilt' is also his. "He, who having totally given up attachment to actions and their fruits, has got over the dependence on the world, and is ever satisfied does nothing at all though he may be ever engaged in action".[22] Both **Hamlet** and the **Gita** are asking for the identification with the still centre of the Wheel and then there is neither action nor suffering.

Frederick Turner's discussion of Hamlet's relation to time gives a slightly different interpretation of the final phase of Hamlet.[23] He also says that the old antithesis between action and suffering has been resolved, and Hamlet's posture may be called "passive activity". But he gives more importance to Hamlet's realisation that in spite of his disqust

with the world, that it is his element, and that he must work within its terms of reference, his affinity, his solidarity with the grave-bound world of time and demonstrating a human loyalty to a woman who seemed at one time to be completely tainted by a universal crime of his mother. He adds that the curious treaty which Hamlet seems to have signed with the forces of time, demands of his complete involvement with the ephemeral and tainted, but still blessed creatures of time; in return he becomes free of past and future.

If Hamlet becomes independent of time by submitting to time, Turner does not seem to give importance to Hamlet's detachment from ego which alone can give that real involvement with time and the human world. He says that it is his acceptance of life as it is that makes him get into a right relationship with Providence but it seems to be the other way about. When he is able to attain detachment from his self in relation to a higher power he also gets really involved in life as it is. Turner ignores this important aspect because he does not see the play in relation to all the important images of role-playing duel and poisoning and their interdependence. Hamlet finally realises his "true self", which is also a transcendence by role-playing in the deeper-sense. Probably there may be a slight difference from the **Gita** in so far as Hamlet perceives that eternal order also **only through the temporal and the human** and also that results in a greater involvement, of course now in the right sense with the temporal and the human.

In **Hamlet** there is also no unequivocal assertion of Providence at the end. Hamlet is never fully aware of the pattern and he remains human till the very end. He both acts and is acted upon; and he knows and does not know. He is more human than Samson at the end and what is emphasised at the end, is reality of human love and the need to hold on to life as revealed in his request to Horatio. There is a new charity in him which brings him closer to Laertes. Even before the duel this new mood descends upon him: "There is nothing in his mind, but the desire to restore human ties and to pass the breathing time of day with a pleasant bout. The revenger died in the graveyard".[24] If the answer to guilt is detachment in the sense of both non-attachment to ego and a sense of dependence on the eternal, the answer to fate is charity and love and if Laertes and Hamlet die through a common fate, Hamlet also transcends it both by his doing his duty with detachment and by cherishing no hatred.

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In **King Lear** this pattern is continued and completed. The recovery movement in **King Lear** is initiated by Lear's insight into his own guilt in the heath and this leads on to his "None doth offend none, I say none".[25] An awareness of common guilt only strengthens the human bond and he is reborn through love. As Rosen has pointed out, Dostoevski has also a similar insight; there is a parallel between Lear's acceptance of guilt and discovery of the worth and love of others and Alyosha's discovery of identity with Gurushenka and his recognition of her worth because of his awareness of guilt in all. Thus he is led on to the acceptance of her love and that brings salvation to both.[26] This can also be compared to the Ancient Mariner's acceptance of guilt and identification with all life before his recovery.[27] In Lear also the sense of guilt not only brings him closer to humanity, it brings to him, love, charity and humility. Here Lear's development is akin to that of Hamlet's development, but there are differences. In Hamlet it is more a recognition of his limitations than a sense of guilt that is emphasised. In Lear the sense of guilt is more intense and correspondingly there is a greater recovery also. The consciousness of sin is a prelude to glory.[28] If in Hamlet the progress is from involved detachment to detached involvement, in Lear the progress is from fury to love. Lastly and most important of all, if Hamlet recognises his kinship with the eternal before rediscovering his humanity, Lear identifies himself with all creations and this is also a very significant development in Shakespeare's art. Northrop Frye has referred to the fact that in this prayer which addresses no deity, but the dispossessed of the earth Lear finds his human identity again;[29] but he does not bring out the development from Hamlet. In Lear there is a greater emphasis on the human simplicities. If **Hamlet** gave more importance to detachment, **King Lear** gives more importance to charity and humility. If Hamlet forgives Laertes, Lear asks for forgiveness from Cordelia.

Lear's journey is towards identity, love and nothingness and these three are .inseparable. The awakening of the real self is coinstantaneous with the purging of the superficial layers of being and this is symbolised by the removal of the clothes. When Lear discovers that essential self, he also discovers his identity with all life, because in the consciousness of real self (Self) there is no distinction at all. This is very mucn akin to the Vedantist view, but there is also a difference. The Vedanta refers to the awakening of Atman, but that results in a discovery of oneness with the Brahman,[30] and not necessarily with all creation (or shall we say, this follows it). Again if the Vedanta speaks of an expansion

and identification through love, it does not presuppose an identification with the guilty brethren. In **King Lear** the discovery of human solidarity is from an intense experience of suffering through a consciousness of sin to an awakening of love within. The Storm scenes, where the humanity is reduced to a gang of fools and madmen, show how humanity is brought together by a common fate. The next stage comes when Lear describes his deeper identity with all, through acceptance of his guilt.

Lear's change within appears to be reciprocated by the cosmic order. If there is something miraculous in the return of Cordelia it is only the miracle of love. There is a dim suggestion of a universal rhythm operating in all this, but it only responds to the human act. If Nemesis seems to evolve into a loving world order it is because of the change within. The rains symbolise the cosmic love and the process of regeneration is completed when he awakes to the reality of Cordelia's love which has come to him, unsought for. If, in the earlier part, the universe itself seems to co-operate with evil forces, now it begins to respond to love and, just as an external sense of coercion was related to inability to love, this universal rhythm of regeneration can be related to the birth of love.

Toynbee, echoing Bergson, has said that "Necessity and Chance are correlative by reason of their very antithesis; for this antithesis does not lie between two alternative and incompatible conceptions of the nature of things; but merely between the human being who feels that he is adrift and the mighty waters that seem to him to be tossing him about as callously as though he were an inanimate piece of flotsam. In a self-regarding mood the castaway views the force that is defeating him in a negative light, as a sheer chaotic disorder and it is in this mood that he gives the name of chance to his irresistible adversary and mistress".[31] Similarly Bergson says that whenever we encounter a different kind of reality from what we anticipated we call it chaos or chance.[32] In **Macbeth** what the hero sees as perversion in the cosmos when Birnamwood 'moves' is only a distorted perspective of reality. In **King Lear** also when Cordelia dies by an accident it also probably signifies an order beyond our vision and Shakespeare deliberately shifts the perspective like this only to emphasise that love alone is real and constant in this world of shifting perspectives.

Cordelia's love remains unaltered and when Lear awakes to that the external factors including death become irrelevant. Though there are references to gods and they are presented

as just, indifferent and malicious by different people on different occasions,[33] Shakespeare does not commit himself to any of these positions and what matters to him is the power of human love and the need for charity and humility which alone can sustain us. Eventhough Lear's language, when he is reunited with Cordelia, has paradisal association, it is only an imaginative rendering of a spiritual rebirth. The father and the daughter meeting here on earth is itself made to suggest a transcendental dimension. Later when he has a vision of their union and says that they will sing like birds in the cage,[34] we notice a return to the grand simplicities of human existence in a language which is also devoid of all superfluities. The human simplicities are given a sacramental beauty; and when he says:

> Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
> The gods themselves throw incense.[35]

We can percieve the suggestion of a divine order being subordinated to human love. It is this power of love and loyalty that is given a transcendental dimension when Lear refuses to accept the reality of Cordelia's death[36] and Kent responds to the call of his dead master.[37] Man cannot avert fate and death but he can certainly transcend it with love and loyalty. If there is no transcendental order in Shakespeare in the conventional sense, there are love and loyalty by which man can transcend his finiteness. If the other tragic heroes of Shakespeare try to recreate their past in their dying moment, Lear looks forward, which may only be a wishful thinking or a child's dream, but yet he says: "We too alone will sing like birds in the cage".[38] And when he dies, he dies with the vision of the other, and no consciousness of his own self, saying:

> Look on her. Look, her lips.
> Look there, look there![39]

In **Macbeth** also we have this double consciousness of Nemesis evolving into a providential order, but this again is related to human love. Macbeth's crippling sense of an oppressing fate is related to his growing incapacity for love and if there is no release for him, it is because he has not awakened to the possibilities of love. If the universe is experienced by him as an automaton, it is because he has lost his capacity to respond to love and life; what is experienced as the act of a malicious fate by him is experienced as the expression of a benevolent good by the good forces and what is experienced as accident by him is luck to them.[40] It is his killing of the human pieties that upsets the moral

order and the terror of the cosmic order is only his experience of an inner void. In a sense we have the reversal of **Hamlet** here. His great recognition is that he is inescapably caught in the web of fate and the downhill movement to damnation is marked only by clearer insights into the horror of the hell in which he suffers. But it is only a negative expression of Heaven which he has denied himself and even his last desperate speech is only a perverted assertion of the values of life. His statement:

She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.[41]

is parallel to what Lady Macbeth had said earlier:

I have given suck, and know
How tender it is to love the babe that milks me;
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.[42]

and in both the cases the human values are asserted negatively.There is a craving for human solidarity throughout, atleast by the play if not by its principal characters and their plight itself is only an affirmation of these values. Lady Macbeth's utterance:

Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.[43]

is one of the world's greatest triumphant statements on human solidarity. If in **Hamlet** there is a sense of providential order in the hero himself, in **Macbeth** it is given to the good characters and that is also related to their humanity and solidarity in suffering and luck also favours them.

In **Antony and Cleopatra** we see a continuation and completion of the Lear pattern. It is significant that the tragic cycle of Shakespeare which began with **Romeo and Juliet** ends with **Antony and Cleopatra** and in the play there is no suggestion of providential order at all, but only the dramatisation of the power of love to transcend fate and death. Of course, the universe being pagan, one cannot look for Christian statements. But the lovers use apocalyptic imagery when they refer to a new heaven and a new earth[44] and this again is only to emphasise the truth that the universe cannot satisfy the demands of love, but in the act of love man can transcend his finiteness. Antony also, like Lear,

looks forward to a reunion in the Hades[45] and eventhough he refers to reviving his Roman image as he dies,[46] he dies in the arms of Cleopatra and later Cleopatra dies uttering the name of Antony.[47] The play imports reality to certain "illusions" and affirms that love alone is real in the world of fluctuating fortunes and through it time and distance can be transcended. **Antony and Cleopatra** is a relatively modern myth on the deathlessness of love and, in Cleopatra's imaginative universe of the last Act, this world becomes unreal and her very role-playing assumes a deeper reality.[48] It is significant that Charmian is blind to the fact of death and she imparts reality to the illusory figure of dead Cleopatra through love.[49]

In the whole of the fifth Act we find an interplay of illusion and reality which is suggestive of the universe of **the Tempest** and **The Winter's Tale.** There is a suggestion of role-playing in the final farewell of Cleppatra and her associates but it is also a means of discovery of the real identity when it is charged with love.

In **Cilappatikāram** also we find a similar emphasis upon the secular values and the power of the human effort and love to transcend fate rather than any intervention of a transcendental order. There are various kinds of gods mentioned in the course of the epic. We have nature deities, references to the Hindu gods such as Indra, Kotravai, Mayoon and Murugan;[50] we have also references to the Jain and Buddhist creeds, but the gods only accompany and do not influence the action of the epic. The importance is given only to the human protaganists and Kannaki is made to evolve into a goddess parallel to these deities. Even the Maturapuri goddess only discloses the oracle when she has burnt the city and the god of fire also obeys only her command.[52] We find the operation of a law independent of gods and this is very close to the Greek view of life. But if the oracle is fulfilled in the burning of Madurai, it also forges Kannaki into a superhuman power and Ilango's emphasis is on this ability to evolve and transcend fate. If the story has a cyclical view of life, the epic imposes upon it an evolutionary or progressive view and that is why it has a climactic movement. If the story refers to the burden of the past, the plot has a continually ascending pattern. The concept of fate is turned upside down because that itself results in the assertion of the human power. In traditional Jain works like **Yasōdhara Kāviyam**[53] humanity is condemned to an endless cylce of births, but here humanity's effort to transcend it here and now is emphasised. It is important to note that the oracle is revealed only when Kannaki has fulfilled it, and that knowledge also results in further development of her character

in a way not anticipated by the oracle at all. Here we have an evolution in Kannaki comparable to that of Hamlet and Lear. The assertive Kannaki who sets out to ruin Madurai realises her human limitations when the Maturapuri goddess discloses that she had been only an instrument of a larger power and when she recognises her nothingness and identifies herself with that larger power, she attains even greater power. If the peripeteia of **Hamlet** can be said to begin with Hamlet's recognition after the death of Polonius that he had been both a scourge and a minister and it is completed when he simply surrenders to a larger power and chooses to suffer rather than act and the peripeteia of **King Lear** can be said to beign with Lear's identification with all the wretched creatures and a consciousness of his guilt, we can fix the peripeteia of **Cilappatikāram** in Kannaki's recognistion of her humanity in **Kaṭṭurai kātai** and her acceptance of the larger power.[54] If fate had been forging her all the time and if she had been a passive sufferer, she had also been evolving into a cosmic power and there is a combination of submissiveness and power in her personality. If fate had worked through her, it had also elevated her and invested her with a power and, if superficially she is opposed to it, she also evolves into it; this is comparable to Dover Wilson's Comment on Hamlet. Hamlet seems to be fatalistic when he accepts the final duel, but that also has been interpreted as his real action.[55] Later, if fate evolves into an evolutionary appetite, Kannaki also evolves from being an instrument of fate into a vehicle of that evolutionary appetite. This seems to demonstrate that the concept of fate and the possiblity of evolution are not irreconcilable. If this dualism is there in her personality right from the beginning it becomes explicit when her fury at the death of Kovalan dissolves into greater submissiveness and charity.

We can notice this dualistic development in her character from another point of view also. If suffering had strengthened her in the earlier part, it had also developed her spiritual pride which is revealed in her refusal to worship gods to bring back Kovalan as suggested by Devanthi.[56] The growth of this pride can be seen when she accuses Kovalan in a rather self-righteous tone in **Kolaikkaḷak Kātai.**[57] And it is only the culmination of this process that we find when she resolves to burn Madurai on hearing the news of the death of Kovalan and says:

> If it is true that I am a chaste woman
> I will burn Madurai with its King.[58]

This is comparable to the development of Lear's fury and

his command to the heavens to punish the wicked when he cries:

> And thou, all shaking thunder,
> Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
> Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,
> That make ingrateful man![59]

And, when he descends into madness a new light dawns upon him and a new love possesses his soul. Lear's progress is from self-righteousness to charity through self - accusation.[60] In Kannaki's case there is no recognition of her guilt, but she learns that Kovalan had been guilty in the earlier birth and we can say that to some extent she realises her share also in the guilt. And then we find in Kannaki also the birth of detachment, humility and charity. And this evolution begins in **Vañcik Kāṇṭam** when she encounters the hill-men without any anger when they referred to her physical deformity.[61] and finds its culmination when she forgives the Pandiya King saying, "The King of the South is guiltless. And I am his own daughter".[62] If Lear's progress is from pride to humility, from egotism to charity, from hatred to love, Kannaki also progresses from passiveness to a greater serenity and charity through fury.

There is also a similarity in the history of their fortunes as well. Lear's purification is related to the stripping of his power and when he identifies himself with the wretched sufferers, there is a movement towards recovery. Similarly, Kannaki's sublimation comes when she is most wretched after she has torn one of her breasts. (One is tempted to compare this with Lear's tearing of his clothes in order to identify himself with the most wretched of the universe). Probably there is more of triumph in Kannaki than in Lear and that gives **Cilappatikāram** a climactic structure. In Lear there is purification but we do not have such a sublimation as we find in Kannaki. Lear remains fully human till the end. Kannaki also retains her humanity even in her apotheosis, but yet it is apotheosis and she suggests the possibility of the evolution of the human into the divine. This is an important difference between the two tragedians, and perhaps this can be stated as a generic difference between the Western and Eastern attitudes to life.

This idea can be further illustrated by comparing the beginning and the end in Shakespearean tragedies and **Cilappatikāram.**

In both Shakespeare and Ilango, the beginning recapitu-

lates the end and the end recapitulates the beginning. Helen Gardner has referred to this pattern in Shakespearean tragedies: "The play **(Hamlet)** ends with a soldier's funeral. It opens with sentries at their watch, being relieved. In the four great tragedies, when his imagination was working at its highest pitch, Shakespeare relates his beginnings to his ends particularly closely. Granville Barker pointed out how **King Lear** ends as it began with Lear and his three daughters on the stage and with the old king hanging on the hope of words from Cordelia's lips. Any writer dramatising Cinthio's story of the Moor of Venice would end with the midnight scenes of the attempted murder of Cassio and the death of Desdemona. Shakespeare has invented a great midnight opening to balance this close, with brawling in the streets followed by the midnight scene before the Senate, where, with the approval of Venice, Othello is united to Desdemona, as in the last scene he is united to her in death before the eyes of the envoys of Venice. **Macbeth** begins and ends with battles. It opens with the epic narrative of the defeat of the thane of Cawdor who had rebelled and closes with the defeat of the thane of Cawdor who had usurped."[63] And this is parallel to the structure of **Cillappatikāram.** It begins with a ritual in which Kannaki was blessed by others;[64] it ends with a ritual in which Kannaki blesses all.[65] The wedding is an initiation into motherhood; at the end she becomes a divine mother to all. The final ceremony marks the culmination of her evolution which started with her wedding and the deification seems to have begun with that. But the difference is equally important. There is a greater progress in **Cilappatikāram** which has a continually ascending movement and Kannaki is evolving gradually from a domestic heroine into a universal symbol, Whereas in Shakespeare, the movement is circuitous, though progressive. If on the one hand **Cilappatikāram** illustrates only the power of fate, Ilango sees in it also an evolutionary appetite and, in the epic, there is a synthesis of the two views. Even if man is subject to fate, that does not deny the possibility of evolution--even fate itself can be said to make the evolution necessary and possible. The structure enacts this meaning by making the story of Kovalan subordinate to that of Kannaki. Even the story of the earlier birth is given only to Kannaki,[66] and that also enables Kannaki to **evolve** further.(In Man's collision with cosmic power and that of fate with love, we see a Hegelian conflict of similar powers.)

If in **Cilappatikāram** a cyclical story is given a climactic shape, in Shakespeare we find a circuitous but progressive form and this can be related to M.H.Abrams's contention about the structure of the Romantic lyric "Typically this

type of lyric begins with a description of the landscape moves into a sustained meditation which involves the speaker's past, present and future, and ends in a return to the outer scene, but on a higher level of insight".[67] He has related this to the Biblical view of history which sees the end in the beginning, and the temporal as being charged with the eternal.[68] And we see the impact of this pattern in Shakespeare himself.

Kannaki's final evolution is possibly Ilango's version of a **correlative** to the Nirvana in which humanity achieves liberation from the Wheel of Karma by attaining an equipoise beyond suffering. Her statement about the Pandiya King at that moment shows her charity consequent on her discovery of a deeper human solidarity which is again the result of the awareness of a common fate. The passage even verbally is very close to Lady Macbeth's statement about Duncan:

Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.[69]

There are so many differences between Kannaki and Lady Macbeth, but the underlying concepts are similar in the two passages. Both Shakespeare and Ilango, why even Kannaki and Lady Macbeth, are aware of a deeper human bond through sin in one case and suffering in the other. In Shakespeare the idea is: 'Ultimately everyone is guilty and therefore no one is'. In Ilango the idea is: 'Ultimately no one is guilty, Fate is.' Ilango takes pains to bring home to us that the Pandiya King was not guilty at all. The goddess of Maturapati also speaks about this. It is the fate of Kovalan that works through the Pandiya King, it is the fate of Madurai that works through Kannaki and this awareness of a common fate also brings them together. This can be related to the Vedanta according to which it is only the Self that works through the 'Killer' and the 'Killed'.[70] Wilfred Owen echoes this idea in the **Strange Meeting.**[71] But the difference between Shakespeare and Ilango is only superficial. There is no moral irresponsibility in either. Human nature being what it is, man can transcend the human tragedy only through detachment, humility and charity. In Shakespeare the consciousness of guilt leads to the birth of charity; in Ilango the consciousness of fate leads to it, and that is the only difference. But again, as we have argued earlier, guilt and fate are not exclusive categories.

The need for forgiveness is emphasised both in Shakespeare and Ilango. In Shakespeare it is most clearly brought out in **King Lear.** Lear not only cries, "change places: and.

handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief?",[72] but in a scene of unutterable pathos and beauty he bends his knees before Cordelia asking for forgiveness when she craves for his, saying,

O, look upon me, sir,
And hold your hands in benediction O'er me.
No, Sir, you must not kneel.[73]

And we find the culmination of this mood when Lear has a paradisal vision in prison ignoring all earthly realities and says:

We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage;
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down
And ask of thee forgiveness;[74]

If in Shakespeare the emphasis is on the need to be forgiven, in Ilango the characters show a greater desire to forgive. Dr.M.Varadarajan has referred to this aspect in his **Ilango Adigal.**[75] But he would attribute this to the saintliness of the author. But this can be related to the concept of fate. In a sense there is no real struggle between the characters when they are aware of their common struggle with fate and the spirit of the work in this respect is crystallised in Madhavi's second letter to Kovalan, in which with great humility she says that she is not aware of any guilt on her part, but yet she pleads for forgiveness.[76] Madhavi's serenity and humility here are comparable to those of Kannaki at the end. Not only Kannaki and Madhavi, but almost all the characters forgive each other and charity sweeps like a tidal wave in the heart of Kannaki when she in her final exaltation and equipoise utters the great truth of forgiveness to which reference has been already made. This idea can be found in the utterances of so many characters in Shakespeare particularly when they discover their oneness with the others before death. The duel scene in **Hamlet** is symbolic of the human situation in which ignorant armies clash by night. We find soon that Hamlet forgives Laertes. In **Cilappatikāram** the division results in a deeper synthesis.

In this connection we can note that Kopperundevi's dream is only a continuation of that of Kannaki. All this would prove that Ilango saw a deeper identity in the characters who were apparently divided. They are parts of a larger whole and that is why one's sin affects another and one is able to redeem the sin of another. If there is a suggestion that we are all collectively involved in every sin (which is parallel to the Christian concept of Original Sin) that

also means that there is a deeper identity between all of us and suffering can restore this sense of deeper brotherhood. So if Kopperundevi and Kannaki, Nedunchezhiyan and Kannaki are divided by fate, they also discover a deeper identity which results in charity. This has a surprising similarity to Nietzsche's account of the Greek tragedy, according to whom the idea of tragedy is "the fundamental knowledge of the oneness of everything existent, the conception of individuation as the prime cause of evil, and of art as the joyous hope that the bonds of individuation may be broken in augury of a restored oneness."[77]

And this emphasis on charity and humility is reinforced by the political theme in the **Vañcik Kāṇṭam.** The very project of Cheran Chenguttuvan to fetch a stone to honour Kannaki shows the subordination of military heroism to the power of love. If the **Kāl Kōt Kātai** celebrates the military heroism of **Cheran Chenguṭṭuvan,** the need for humility and penance is brought out in **Naṭukar Kātai** through Matalan.[78] And the fury of Cheran Chenguttuvan subsides into an expansive love and this is parallell to Kannaki's evolution. In the final vision of Ilango not only divided human protagonists discover a deeper bond; the divided parts of Tamilnadu are also brought together in a higher synthesis. In this respect, we can say that **Pukārk Kāṇṭam** is the thesis, **Maduraik Kāṇ-ṭam** is the antithesis, and in **Vañcik Kanṭam** we have the synthesis. And this is parallel to the evolution of Kannaki, from her initial humility, through fury to final charity which is power. The dream of a unified Tamilnadu is implicit in the overall structure of **Cilappatikāram.** Not only Kannaki passes through all the three parts; Ilango reveals the deeper unity of the divided parts by making her suffer in the Pandiya country and making her attain the deification in Vanci. This is parallel to his intuition of the deeper unity of the human protagonists in suffering -- Kopperundevi, Madhavi and Kanna-ki. The wife of the Chera King takes the initiative to honour her[79] and this is symbolic of the deeper unity of humanity as well as the Tamil country. Kannaki on her part brings purification to the Pandiya Kingdom and victory to the Chera Kingdom and there is the resurrection of entire Tamilnadu through her. Whereas the **Kaṭṭurai** of each Kantam speaks of only a part of the Tamil country, the **Nurkatturai** speaks about the entire Tamilnadu which suggests that the earlier divisions were aspects of a larger whole.[80] And in **Varantaru Kātai** we find hints of even a larger brotherhood emerging under the aegis of this principle of love of Sakti.[81]

If **Cilappatikāram** shows interesting parallels to **King Lear** in the emphasis on charity based on the discovery of

human identity and humility, it shows equally interesting parallel to **Antony and Cleopatra, Romeo and Juliet, Othello** in the treatment of love as having power to transcend fate. Not only Kovalan is redeemed through the love of Kannaki, the intensity of their love is also enhanced by their suffering. With idyllic loveliness Ilango paints a scene of domestic bliss in **Kolaikkaḷak Kātai** when Kovalan and Kannaki are given a few timeless moments at the residence of Madhavi when Kovalan is supposed to touch her feet with affection and embrace her.[82] It is love that impels her to challenge the power of the King and makes her say that unless she finds her husband she will not find any rest[83] and she also pursues him across the hills and valleys sustained by love.[84] She is not only able to exonerate him in this life; she is able to expiate the sin and thus she not only restores his image, but she is able to resurrect him. But in her there is further development -- she attains a holier love or charity which is coupled with humility which makes her identify herself with the creative centre.

In the case of King Nedunchezhiyan also we find a similar development. If the cruel fate bends his sceptre he is able to set it right by paying the price of his life and Kopperundevi also answers fate by that spontaneous act of self - sacrifice.[85] Her instantaneous death embracing him and falling on her husband's feet shows the power of human love to assert itself beyond the ashes and they discover a deeper unity through this: "Love and death are mysteriously allied; the sacrament of sex, tearing two individuals out of themselves to unite them in the shock of a life-giving surrender is only the symbol of a vaster union unattainable save by the supreme surrender of dying".[86]

Thus we find that both Shakespeare and Ilango are alike in emphasising human power to transcend fate through love, charity and humility. In fact, fate itself seems to turn out into evolutionary appetite and this is made known only through the human love. If the external sense of coercion can be related to the sense of guilt, the evolutionary aspect of the cosmic order can be related to the birth of love and charity in the human protagonists. But in both there is the dim suggestion of the divine love only through the human love. The change in the cosmic order is preceded by the change within. Both seem to be akin to the Vedantic view of life in their emphasis upon the deeper human identity. But Shakespeare seems to give more importance to identification with all life. Another important difference is that there seems to be a great evolution both in the human protagonists as well as the cosmic order in Ilango than in Shakespeare.

Ilango seems to be more Aeschylan in this respect and Shakespeare seems to be closer to Sophocles.

According to Kitto there is a forward movement in Aeschylus's **The Orestia** but "Sophocles' thought takes quite a different course. It is not evolutionary; the idea of a progressive deity is utterly foreign to it. . .He contemplates rather the human situation at large as one which is fixed and governed by laws that do not and cannot change; in his conception of Dike, the World Order, there is no place for anything progressive; it is something inherent in the nature of the Universe and of Man, something eternal".[87] Whatever the real position in Sophoclean tragedy may be, it is difficult to **equate** this with the position in Shakespearean tragedy, eventhough we cannot go to the other extreme and say with Bradley that the cosmsic order is entirely evolutionary.[88] And this is most clear when we compare **King Lear** with **Cilappatikāram.** Certainly Lear grows through suffering, but the law seems to take its own course and Lear's recovery of madness however sublime it may be at the end shows that in the Shakespearean vision at **this** stage evil is **absorbed** and not fully **transcended.**

If in Ilango the hero seems to be more ridden by fate than the Shakespearean tragic heroes, the heroine seems to be more assertive than Shakespeare's heroes as well as heroines. Kovalan's destiny evokes more of pity than terror, Kannaki's destiny evokes more of terror than pity and again Kovalan seems to be more pitiable than Shakespeare's heroes and Kannaki is more awe-inspiring than Shakespearean heroes as well as heroines.

If on the one hand humanity appears to be more helpless in Ilango we have the counter movement in which there is more progress than in Shakespeare and because the tragic emotion is a compound made out of both, the final impression in Ilango is not very different from that of Shakespeare. But the greater emphasis given to the heroine as against the hero in Shakespeare and its bearing on the tragic experience in both require a more detailed consideration to which the next Chapter will be devoted.

CHAPTER IV

TYPES OF TRAGIC WOMEN

Ruskin's view that Shakespeare has no heroes but only heroines[1] is more true of his comedies than of his tragedies and probably it might be truer to say that Ilango has no hero, but only two heroines. It is significant that Shakespeare and Ilango who give importance to the power of love as an answer to fate should also give great importance to the redemptive principle of love symbolised in women. But, of the two, Ilango gives a greater importance to the active role of women than even Shakespeare does and **Cilappatikāram** is more a tragedy of Kannaki than of Kovalan. The whole of **Vañcik Kanṭam** is devoted only to the transcendental triumph of Kannaki and also the perpetuation of her memory in earthly terms. Shakespeare gives this much importance to the heroine only in his love tragedies, particularly **Antony and Cleopatra** where the fifth Act is devoted entirely to the triumphant death of Cleopatra. The parallel is significant because **Antony and Cleopatra** is also a mythic version of the tragedy of an Eastern heroine (though not that alone) where also the emphasis is on the triumph of transcendental love.[2] In this chapter it is proposed to bring out the status of the woman in the tragic universe of both and the philosophic as well as aesthetic significance of their treatment of women.

According to T.R.Henn, "Shakespeare's greatest and most vital women belong, save for Juliet and Cordelia and Cleopatra, to comedy."[3] The exceptions are significant--if one may add Lady Macbeth also to this list. That would

mean that Shakespeare began and ended his tragic career with plays giving importance to womanhood and that accounts for the uniquely Shakespearean tone of the tragedies also. The fatalistic tone of **Romeo and Juliet** which he inherited from the Middle Ages is countered by the assertion of life instincts symbolised in woman. In the Greek tragedies also women do play an important role, but there is a difference in the kind of role they play. Medea, Antigone and Clytemnestra are more ruthless, but in Shakespeare the emphasis is on their power for absorption in 'the other' and what they display is the heroism of the spirit. Even Lady Macbeth is an exception to the rule only at a superficial level. Danby describes the function of women in Shakespearean tragedies as following: "The reason for the appearance of women in Shakespeare's at this point (there are no dominating women in the essential plot of **Julius Caesar)** is fairly evident. Shakespeare has turned from the political aspect of his theme because he has found the real centre of his problem in the private world of individual's conscience and the individual's fallibility. He needs Hamlet's love of his mother to replace as a motive the love of justice which operated in Brutus".[4] It is true that in and after **Hamlet** Shakespeare is interested in certain universal problems and ethical issues rather than political problems alone and he subordinates politics to ethics and he is more concerned with the breaking of human bonds than the destruction of a kingdom. Consequently women have not only an important role to play but they are reduced to a more basic role as essentially women rather than as queens and princesses. Even Goneril, Lady Macbeth and Cleopatra are more womanly than queenly. But it is not correct to say that the tragedies are not concerned with politics at all. Hamlet has the motive of justice as well his personal agony and the stature of the heroes is not lost sight of, whereas women are confined to private but deeper and more universal layers of existence. They are complementary to each other and both together complete the vision of tragedy. This can also be related to Northrop Frye's view that Shakespeare uses "moral lightning-rods on both sides of his heroes to deflect the pity and terror"[5] and he places Desdemona and Iago on the sides of Othello for this purpose. Just as there is the intensification of the hero's evil in his villains, there is the intensification of man's helplessness in his heroines and consequently they enhance "the pathos of human destiny".[6] But at the end of his tragic career, women become more assertive and active than they were in the beginning.

In Ilango also the world tragedy or the tragedy of the kings is subordinated to the domestic tragedy of Kovalan

and Kannaki and if there are reverberations in a wider universe they spring from the individuals's pain. The political tragedy of King Nedunchezhian and the military victory of Chenguttuvan are both subordinated to the tragedy and triumph of Kannaki and the national history becomes part of an individual's heroic story. In a way, as we have already argued, the poem also tells the story of Tamilnadu and it also creates a vision of unified Tamilnadu by making Kannaki pass through the three parts of Tamilnadu and also mysteriously linking Kannaki, Kopperundevi and the queen of the Chera King through suffering and certain common ideals and this is explicitly brought out in **Nūrkaṭṭurai** which refers to **"the Tanṭamil Varaippu"** whereas the other **Kaṭṭurais** refer only to the parts of Tamilnadu.[7] Just as the human characters, who are initially divided and fight with each other, discover a deeper identity between themselves and there is a synthesis, there is a similar discovery of identity and synthesis in the political plane also. But it is all subordinated to, and derived from, the tragedy of human relationship. This, along with the subordination of Kavundhi to Kannaki, is symbolic of the flowering of a humanistic faith in the individual. Like Shakespeare's women, Ilango's women also suffer but in Ilango women play a more important role and they are also not corrupted as some of Shakespeare's women are.

Shakespeare brings the dualism of human nature through women in the tragedies. Here again Danby has a useful comment, ". . . . . . both Gertrude and Ophelia are less significant in themselves than they are as auguries of the villainesses and heroines to come. The line from Gertrude goes through Cressida and Lady Macbeth, to Goneril and Regan; that from Ophelia through Desdemona to Cordelia".[8] But we must see where Juliet and Cleopatra fit in this genealogy and also whether there is any significant pattern in this evolution. Probably he will place Juliet along with Desdemona and Cleopatra along with Lady Macbeth, Goneril and Regan. Can we associate this dualism with the archetypal image of woman portayed in the Phaedra of Euripides, Eve of Milton and even in the Babylonian Ishtar who, according to Miss Bodkin, "faithful, tender and pitiful as she appears in the cult, yet in the great and popular epic of **Gilgamesh** is presented as faithless to her lovers and the source of their ruin . . . . The tyrannous grasp upon man's emotion possessed by the dynamic image of woman in its aspect as cherishing, satisfying, exalting, adds to the terror of its other aspect as enslaving, betraying".[9] This dualism is presented some times in two characters as in Ophelia and Gertrude and Cordelia and Goneril (and Regan) or as

in one character in Lady Macbeth and Cleopatra. Wilson Knight compares Cleopatra with Lady Macbeth and concludes that in Cleopatra there is the assertion of life instincts whereas in Lady Macbeth we see the assertion of death impulses. He compares Lady Macbeth's words:

I have given suck and know
How tender 't is to love the babe that milks me-
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums
And dash'd the brians out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

With Cleopatra's "Dost thou not see my babe suck my breast?"[10] But what is most important is the similarity rather than the difference and even in Lady Macbeth, there is only the war embrace of the two impulses. The daemonic energy of both the women is related to, and is a perverted version of, the biological urge in woman, even though probably there is less of perversion in Cleopatra than in Lady Macbeth and this is only another version of the evolutionary appetite in his heroines of the Romantic Comedies which is found also in Juliet. Ophelia, Desdemona and Cordelia represent the creative aspect, and even here there is evolution in the sense that the woman image becomes more and more assertive (and paradoxically, also humble) as we pass on from Ophelia through Desdemona to Cordelia. It is this growing sense of creative instincts in woman in Shakespeare that accounts for the humanity and daemonic energy in Lady Macbeth and the richer synthesis in Cleopatra. We may see a dialectical movement in Shakespeare's vision of woman. The assertive romantic heroine is followed by the suffering woman, and in Cleopatra we have a synthesis and this pattern is followed in the last plays. Wilson Knight's view is rather extreme when he says that we have a combination of Lady Macbeth and Desdemona in Cleopatra,[11] and we can only say that while Shakespeare's emphasis is on the dualism of women, he also felt the need for a greater role of their creative or feminine instincts for the salvation of mankind. And this is an important moment not only in Shakespeare's tragic career but also in the history of ideas in Europe. We have this protest of woman even in the **Aeneid** in which, according to Miss Bodkin, critics have noticed "the intensity with which the unsanctioned passion and anger of Dido asserts itself against her creator's loyalty to the patriarchal ideal, with its subordination of woman, and rejection of spontaneity in love".[12] And significantly enough Antony refers to Aeneas' meeting Dido in the underworld and there is also a modification of the myth in **Antony and Cleopatra** because here there is a suggestion of getting reconciled with Aeneas.[13]

According to Miss Bodkin in the story of Orpheus's search for Eurydice in the Hades, this pattern is continued but he too accepts as inevitable a system of 'masculine' thought and morality, ignoring all such sympathies and holds a part of himself unrealised".[14] In Dante most of these aspects are crystallised not only in Francesca but also in Beatrice, because, Dante 'descended' into the underworld of his own nature, and, more fortunate than Orpheus, released out of the struggling night of impulses an ideal shape, the heavenly Beatrice.[15] And this process is further extended and humanised in Shakespeare's creation of Cleopatra and Cordelia, and here we find a greater sublimation of the power of passion in Cleopatra and a richer humanisation of love divine in Cordelia. As Bodkin has pointed out, the wheel has come its full circle in Goethe's Gretchen.[16] But surprisingly she does not relate Cleopatra and Cordelia to this pattern.

We find a similar process in the creation of Madhavi and Kannaki in **Cilappatikāram.** As a matter of fact, **Cilappatikāram** seems to be the great protest of the suppressed feminine instincts in man with reference to Tamil culture and imaginatively it recreates a matriarchal society against the tyranny of a patriarchal culture and this tension between the imaginative structure and the social pattern is only an artistic equivalent as well as an answer to the battle in the unconscious of the people. All works of art dramatise certain conflicts in certain phases of human culture and attain a momentary synthesis also through dramatisation. This release was possible because of this potential in this myth which, in its original form, possibly goes back to the Proto-Dravidian stage.[17] It is quite possible that Ilango consciously wanted to protest only against the martial values of his age but that has resulted in the recreation of the cult of woman itself. Throughout the epic we find the tension between the suppression of women on the one hand and their real power over men on the other, and even king Chenguttuvan is supposed to listen to his wife's advice before his decision.[18] And this was the consequence of the growing degradation of women in the society. Even in Sangam poetry references to harlots are there,[19] but because women enjoyed all other privileges the wound in the society was not at all felt then. So only in an age this degradation of woman must have been deeply felt and hence the protest through art. The suppression in the society could have found its echo in the suppression in the great Jain artist, Ilango himself which partially accounts for this importance given to woman in his epic. It is possible to say that just as Shakespeare passes through tragic gloom to serenity through his discovery

of faith in women, Ilango also counters the Jain concept of life and fate with the release from the unconscious the cult of woman. Here again we find the dualism of woman symbolised in Madhavi and Kannaki but there are also significant differences. As in his portrayal of men here again there is less consciousness of evil and a comparison of Madhavi and Kannaki with Cleopatra and Cordelia would be useful in this connection.

Both Cleopatra and Madhavi symbolise the renaissance of senses and the beauty of human passion. Both can be associated with the perennial youth of the universe and partake of the richness of the elements. Danby associates the profusion of rich and hectic colour that surrounds Cleopatra with the colour of the endless cycle of growth and decay, new greenery on old rottenness, the colour of the passions, the wild flaring of life as it burns itself richly away to death so that love of life and greed for death become indistinguishable.[20] Ilango's association of Madhavi with objects of sensuous richness throughout the earlier part and the language of her first letter to Kovalan lead us[21] to a similar interpretation of Madhavi. Both have an infinite variety of moods and indulge in love wrangle which exhibits their energy and vitality. If Cleopatra is associated with the Nile and Isis,[22] Madhavi is associated with the Cauvery and the Moon.[23] That means that both Shakespeare and Ilango associate womanhood with the mystery of creation and the beginning of life and there is a closer kinship between the elements and women in the primitive society. The Sumerian goddess Ishtar, is also a moon deity and an earth and mother goddess. It is quite possible that both Cleopatra and Madhavi therefore stand for the tantalising creative (and to start with, amoral) energies of the universe. Cleopatra's constant references to the Nile acquire a new significance if we look at the play this way. It is interesting to note that Cleopatra gives the illusion of fertile nature while she is dead: "The asp, wriggling its way from the basket to her breast, carries more than its mortal sting; it bears the salt and savour of all that natural life whose passionate child Cleopatra had been. The asp is very much more than a theatrical convenience; it is a symbol of nature reclaiming one part of its own".[24] One is reminded of the myth of Sita being taken back by mother earth.

If both Cleopatra and Madhavi in their love show the energies of the universe, they also sublimate "that blind fury of the biological urge" into an art.[25] If Cleopatra was a great artist in the art of love making and discovers the reality of love through role-playing, Madhavi too expands

into love through art. But in the beginning their art is spoiled by the intrusion of ego in both. Possibly the tragedy of Cleopatra is that she over-does her role-playing; Cleopatra's role-playing with Thidias is mistaken by Antony and later again it is her desire to play the role of his partner in the battle that ruins him and finally he dies because he did not see her role-playing when she sent a messenger to say that she was dead; but it was also a road to the discovery of the reality of her love and in the later part, she continues the role-playing in a deeper sense of the term--she imparts reality to role-playing by total identification with the role. This is parallel to the theme of role-playing in **Hamlet**.

We have a similar development in Madhavi from **Kānal Vari** onwards which constitutes the first peripeteia of the poem. This suggests a parallel with the Player's Scene in **Hamlet**, where we have the first peripeteia and the second and more important one is to be found when Hamlet kills Polonius which brings out a greater change in his character and fortunes. Here again we find role-playing used to discover reality. The actors simply play the role with involvement, but Claudius does not witness the play with detachment and that spoils the art. This is parallel to the last scene where Laertes spoils the game by having his personal interests whereas Hamlet fulfils the role and that identification is a liberation to him. In **Kānal Vari**, when Kovalan sings, he simply plays a role, and this identification with art releases the image of Kannaki from the unconscious[26] and awakens his moral sense also. But in the case of Madhavi also if there was first the intrusion of ego in her art and there was 'identification' in the wrong sense, soon she completely identifies her with art in the real sense and that results in the deepening of humanity through her song. It is a moment of discovery for both Kovalan and Madhavi and both progress towards reality through art.

In the case of Madhavi **Kānal Vari** is symbolic of her whole life--probably the intrusion of self in art was only symbolic of the intrusion of self in love, but just as she progresses from identification to liberation in art, she also progresses from identification to liberation in life. Even in the beginning, **she** identifies herself in the role of his sweetheart but that is not enough because she has not completely identified herself with 'the other' and this comes later. There is also an evolution in the style of her letters from the suggestive sensuous art of the first letter to the naked selfless simplicity and humanity of the second which

comes out of suffering.[27] What art began, suffering completes and the artist has now learned the great lesson of humility and love and detachment through suffering and there is no inconsistency in this evolution. As an artist she has always been on the borderland between illusion and reality, probably in the first part she saw the reality of the world of illusion i.e. art; later she saw that the real world was also an illusion, and also that the only reality behind that illusion was selfless love. There is a similar evolution in Cleopatra also. In her case later she begins to play the role with greater involvement and that also gives her some detachment. In her language also there is a new simplicity and humanity at the end.[28] But she is not capable of the expansion and detachment of Madhavi and her language with the new simplicity is still charmingly sensuous. Probably at the end there is only sublimation of certain impulses in Cleopatra whereas there is total transcendence in Madhavi. If Cleopatra also sees life as an illusion she does not want to transcend it; she wants to impart reality to it through love, whereas Madhavi seeks liberation from that illusion into a higher love. If Cleopatra ends up with a role-playing with such an involvement which makes it so real, Madhavi chooses the road of detachment. And probably this brings out a fundamental, if a very subtle, difference between Shakespeare's attitude to life and Ilango's, and possibly also between the Western and Eastern views in general. Probably Shakespearean emphasis is on right involvement and Ilango's on right detachment but one always pre-supposes the other and therefore the difference is only minimal.

According to Danby, "Cordelia is the apex of Shakespeare's mind"[29] and her immediate predecessor is Desdemona. We can say that Kannaki represents the highest phase in the chain of being in Ilango's vision and both Cordelia and Kannaki show a clear affinity with Beatrice. Both, in suffering all suffer nothing; and both utter only a few words and their source of strength is equipoise and a capacity for selfless love -- they seem to symbolise impersonal depths in the psyche. Both symbolise the principle of intuitive love and are sublimated through suffering.

Initially both Cordelia and Kannaki are rejected by King Lear and Kovalan respectively and that could be taken as a rejection of the Anima in their consciousness in the beginning. It is possible though not justified to accuse Kannaki for being silent when Kovalan praised her so passionately on their first night,[30] just as Cordelia has been blamed for her silence. But probably to both of them love is an unutterable truth. In both of them it is only their spiritual

eminence which is fatal and that alone can be described as their hamartia. According to Northrop Frye "Aristotle's 'hamartia or flaw', therefore is not necessarily wrongdoing, much less moral weakness. It may be simply a matter of being a strong character in an exposed position, like Cordelia."[31] And this can be certainly applied to Kannaki also. We find destiny isolating her for its own purpose. According to Frye, "Tragic heroes are so much the highest points in their human landscape that they seem the inevitable conductors of the power about them, great trees more likely to be struck by lightning than a clump of grass".[32] There is more of this isolation and spiritual pride in Kannaki than in Cordelia and we find it explicitly when she refuses to pray to Kaman so that her husband may return, and tells Devandhi, "It is not commendable".[33]

Both Cordelia and Kannaki symbolise selfless love which comes to the rescue of Lear and Kovalan respectively in their most shattered hours. Cordelia comes all the way to rescue her father in his most shattered hour. Similarly when Kovalan comes back from Madhavi bereft of all his wealth, Kannaki receives him with a smile and offers all that she has.[34] She also undertakes that perilous journey with Kovalan all for his sake and Dr.T.P.Meenakshisundaranar rightly calls it a penance.[35] The divine in her is awakened, to which Salini becomes alive in her frenzy and refers to her apotheosis even then.[36] But interestingly enough Kannaki immediately hides herself behind her husband, which shows her identification with her husband.[37] There is a strange combination of an awe-inspiring power and humanity in her which is comparable to Kamban's portrayal of Rama.[38] One can see a tension between others' awareness of her divinity and her ignornace of it. She may be aware of her higher powers, but whether her subconscious is beginning to be aware of her divinity is questionable. Kovalan sees the deepening of this divine element in her during the journey and his sense of awe is intensified during the journey. The situation becomes paradoxical because he feels an awe before her who hides herself behind him; but probably it is that self-surrender that makes her divine. We have this strange mixture of power and helplessness, of pride and humility in most of Shakespeare's heroines and Milton's Eve[39] and this brings out the paradox of woman. Just as Lear kneels before Cordelia with awe, Kovalan also feels sorry and wants to do penance for the sins of the past and he touches her feet and later describes her in the third person as **'Cirumutuk Kuraivi'**[40] which shows his respect towards her. Both Kovalan and King Lear see the Anima in their own consciousness which was suppressed in the beginning.

From the beginning there is a sense of awe in Kovalan's approach towards Kannaki, which reminds us of Dante's awe before Beatrice.[41] Even in **Manai Arampaṭutta Kātai** he has a dim perception of the divinity and the Mother goddess in her, but that is too much for him at that stage. After and through his life with Madhavi, the Anima is awakened in him and that drives him to Kannaki. During the journey to Madura it is perfected. T.P.Meenakshisundaranar's reference to the religious imagery in the language of Kovalan can be noted in this connection.[42] But there is an evolution here. In the beginning he sees only the divinity of sex; later his unconscious perceives the divinity of Kannaki's love and that is revealed in **Kānal Vari** and finally his conscious self sees her divinity before he leaves her to sell the anklet. But Kannaki's reaction to the penitent Kovalan is different from Cordelia's reaction to Lear's penitent words. Whereas Cordelia says:

> O look upon me, sir,
> And hold your hands in benediction o'er me.
> No, Sir, you must not kneel.[43]

Kannaki seems to speak to him in a tone of self-righteousness and moral indignation. She refers to her having been deprived of the duties of a housewife and she also explicitly refers to his unworthy conduct. Here she gives vent to all her emotions suppressed so far and this makes her all the more human.[44] Here again she utters it only with a sense of duty and she is also worried that he has made her in-laws unhappy. The avenging fury of the later part is glimpsed here and the process is continuous. Cordelia is also only conscious of her duty towards her father and what is 'natural' for a daughter to do and act. Holloway says that the emphasis of the play is on service and duty rather than love in the usual sense.[45] But certainly at this stage there is greater humility in Cordelia than in Kannaki; but both of them take life as a penance rather than pleasure and there is also a hint of spiritual pride in both which is also partially responsible for their initial sufferings. But there is more of it in Kannaki and because she is proud of her penance, ironically enough there is more to come.

Here is a parallel with Madhavi also. Both of them are unselfish but in both there is the intrusion of ego and Kannaki's is possibly a nobler, but also a greater sin because it is a spiritual pride and, in her consciousness of her powers as a wife, she seems to defy the gods who become jealous of her. In Madhavi's case, she gives up her attachment and

ego earlier. Probably they represent two ways of transcending -- one through art and fulfilment of instincts and the other through fulfilment of duties.[46] Kannaki's is a harder way and both fail when there is intrusion of ego. Possibly there is more of attachment than ego in Madhavi and there is more of ego than attachment in Kannaki and that is why Madhavi ends with the denial of pleasures whereas Kannaki ends with the denial of ego and possibly she attains a higher serenity than Madhavi does.

First, Kovalan seems to have taken life as a pleasure, whereas Kannaki took it as a penance and possibly they represent two layers of the culture at that stage. There is no denial of life instincts in Kannaki, but the Jain attitude to life is more prominent in her, whereas in Madhavi and Kovalan there is the intensification and even a slight perversion of the joyous intoxication with life of the Sangam age and therefore here we can also see the conflict in the culture itself. But all the characters are complex and therefore there is the other element also in each and they also develop in the course of the epic. Ultimately Kannaki and Madhavi may be said to be two complementary aspects of Sakti, one standing for Energy and Art and the other, for selfless love which is only a sublimation of the other. It is significant that Madhavi is associated with the Cauvery only whereas Kannaki is associated with Kotravai; Kovalan passes from one level to another level, from an amoral enjoyment of energies of life to a spiritual awakening, from Art to Reality; but only through Madhavi he comes to Reality. Earlier by his total rejection of Madhavi he shows only a partial development. If Madhavi is an illusion, she is only the illusion of reality and that Kovalan discovers only later when he sees her second letter and that is the moment of total synthesis in his personality when the two elements are reconciled. This is parallel to Hamlet's synthesis when he accepts the reality of Ophelia's love in the graveyard. The idea seems to be that we cannot reject any instinct, but we have to reconcile them with one another.

The unity of the epic will be clear if we consider the story of Kovalan only in relation to the two women characters. Madhavi is therefore an instrument in bringing Kovalan to this moral level and then this is completed by Kannaki, who, again, like Madhavi, in bringing him salvation, attains divinity. This accounts for the peculiar structure of **Cilappatikāram**. It has two peripeteia -- one in which Madhavi and Kovalan are involved and the other in which Kannaki and Kovalan are involved. As we have seen, the first peripeteia occurs in **Kānal Vari**, when there is an unexpected change

both in the fortunes and characters of Kovalan and Madhavi, but this is subordinated to and leads on to the real peripeteia in **Vañcik Kāṇṭam** in which we see a significant change in the fortunes and character of Kannaki. The unity of the epic also becomes clear if we consider the deification of Kannaki as the principal theme. Kovalan's 'salvation' is only instrumental to the sublimation of Kannaki. If Kannaki suffers because of Kovalan, she is also sublimated because of him.

. From the beginning she is the focus of attention. Not only she is introduced before Kovalan but she also marks the culmination of the first two Katais.[47] Even **Arankeṟṟu Kātai** ends up with a reference to Kovalan's leaving his home of spotless eminence,[48] which only symbolises Kannaki's universe. In **Anti Mālaic Cirappuccei Kātai** also her sorrow is the culmination[49] and Madhavi's joy is seen only as **a prelude to her sorrow.** The clash between two types of eyes described here is significant;[50] from the beginning the expressiveness of Kannaki's eyes is emphasised, in order to bring out her spiritual powers. On the other hand, Madhavi's eyes are expressive in another way and they stand for another plane of existence and in the clash of the two types of eyes we have the dramatisation of the conflict of similar principles. In **Kānal Vari** also Kannaki is the invisible presence most acutely felt, eventhough physically absent. There is a pause only in **Vēnir Kātai** and from **Kanāttiram Uraitta Kātai** onwards she is almost continuously present and she plays a more active role and the whole of **Vañcikkāṇṭam** is devoted to her. In this respect Kannaki is different from Cordelia and she is closer to Shakespeare's tragic heroes as we have already discussed in the earlier chapter.

There is more development in Kannaki's character than in Cordelia's and finally she is explicitly deified whereas Cordelia's divinity is only suggested. She becomes more assertive in **Maduraik Kāṇṭam** and attains a serenity and humility which is beyond even Lear. Madurai being purged by the flames can be taken as symbolic of the cleansing of Kannaki through the flame of passion. This can be compared with Lear's reference to the wheel of fire[51] before his final serenity. If Cordelia's suffering is needed for the 'salvation' of Lear, the focus of attention is on Lear whereas in **Cilappatikāram** the focus of attention is on Kannaki. If in Shakespeare the emphasis is on the redemption of man through woman, in Ilango the emphasis is on the deification of woman through the salvation of man. In Shakespeare, the 'sinful' man is chosen for 'redemption' through suffering; in **Cilappatikāram** a 'good' character is chosen for further

sublimation through suffering. In **King Lear** when Lear is reunited with Cordelia and has a paradisal vision of their universe beyond time, he says:

> Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
> The gods themselves throw incense[52]

and he also refers to his being taken out of the grave.[53] On the other hand in **Cilappatikāram** Kannaki resurrects Kovalan and ultimately the gods come down to earth along with her husband and take her to a heavenly abode.[54] It appears rather strange that a temple should be erected for a woman without any place for her husband which is all the mor strange because in later Tamil tradition it is woman who worships man. Does it suggest that she found God in him and by that very surrender she attained divinity? It is quite possible that the myth preserves an earlier tradition and indicates the possibility of woman evolving into a higher entity than man. This can be linked, however dimly, with the contention that the worship of Mother goddess or Kotravai must have preceded the worship of Shiva in this part of the country.[55] So when woman attains divinity, she rèaches a higher plane than the one reached by man and man is only in the portal of that sanctuary. She enables man to realise himself and through that, she realises herself. Man is an instrument in bringing out that higher realisation in woman. Kovalan is an instrument in bringing out the deification of Kannaki, whereas Kannaki is an instrument in bringing out the near-deification of man. Woman's salvation or sublimation comes through her salvation of man. This seems to be different from Kamban's conception in which Sita suffers only to bring out the divinity in Rama--but even there Kamban differs from Valmiki in so far as he gives more importance to the glory of woman and her impact on Rama. In a sense Kamban seems to be "feminine" in tone, compared to the masculinity and the heroic virtues of Valmiki's epic.[56]

Here we can also see the **Naṭukal** practice being modified, because formerly only heroes who died in the battlefield were given this honour. Strangely here it is only the military hero who honours Kannaki and here we find the subordination of masculine to feminine values. (Earlier we saw the subordination of asceticism (Kavundhi) to human passion (Kannaki).) To some extent this can also be compared with the military rites being given to Hamlet by Fortinbras. This assertion of feminine values is a natural consequence of the subordination of woman in the social structure. So, superficially, if man's power is brought out, it is countered by the assertion of the feminine values symbolised in the superiority of Kannaki,

Kopperundevi and the wife of Chenguttuvan. This can be compared with the interpretation of **The Orestia** put forward by Bachofen and later endorsed by Engels as "a dramatic depiction of the struggle between declining mother right and rising and victorious father right in the Heroic Age".[57] But we must also be careful to note that neither the **Orestia** nor **Cilappatikāram** is mainly concerned only with this. Possibly it is the triumph of mercy over fury that is emphasised in both, and again probably to a greater extent in **Cilappatikāram** than in **The Orestia** and this also can be related to the more explicit triumph of woman in **Cilappatikāram.**

At another level we can also say that both Cordelia and Kannaki represent the principle of salvation or divine grace coming in the human form and, if both Shakespeare and Ilango refer to the need of grace for human salvation, the emphasis in Ilango is on the grace, and the emphasis in Shakespeare is on the suffering and initiative of the human sinner. Finally, Kannaki can be related to Sakti, the principle of love which is made superior to the impersonal law of the universe, which in traditional terms, could be related to Shiva. Not only is Kannaki associated with Kotravai explicitly by the gate-Keeper of the Pandiya King,[58] she is indirectly associated with other forms of Sakti as well in **Āycciyar Kuravai,** and **Kunrak Kuravai.**[59] Finally we can also notice in this connection that Kotravai has also absorbed the attributes of Shiva.[60] The need for a compassionate god is felt in Shakespeare also. but the death of Cordelia suggests a dualism suggesting synthesis in the cosmic order, whereas in **Cilappatikāram** the feminine absorbs the masculine and mercy is more explicitly triumphant over justice and fate.

One objection that may be raised to this is the fact or the view that Ilango is a Jain and how can we expect this much importance to the Hindu gods in a Jain work of art? Even taking for granted that Ilango is a Jain, it is not difficult to reconcile the use of the Hindu myth with his religion because Ilango **as a poet** could have needed this myth. Even in other respects we have noticed the tension between the Jain and the artist and the alchemy of creation should have worked out a synthesis. We can also relate it to the interpenetration of the two religions in the society itself.

But more specifically, is not the view that she represents the divine principle coming to save humanity against the tenet that Kannaki symbolises the possibility of the human

spirit to reach the divine? This is only an anagogic interpretation at a deeper level of abstraction whose validity is of course questionable.[61] But certainly Ilango saw in Kannaki a symbol of the human being charged with the divine and becoming divine. She is a manifestation of Sakti and this tendency to see the divine in the human finds its culmination in Bharati. Bharati's triumphant humanism is the consequence of his faith in Sakti and he sees the operation of Sakti not only in creation but also in revolutions. His **Pattinippeṉ** is a humanised Sakti, the feminine in the cosmic as well his mind.

It is this importance that is given to the triumph of Kannaki that gives **Cilappatikāram** a structure and a flavour slightly different from that of a typical Shakespearean tragedy. The death of Kovalan comes like a fortunate fall which leads only to the sublimation of Kannaki and the pattern here is Conflict **(PukārkKāṇṭam),** Catastrophe **(Maduraik Kāṇṭam)** and Consummation **(Vañcik Kāṇṭam).** And in this respect it is more like Eliot's **Murder in the Cathedral** and **Antony and Cleopatra.** In **Murder in the Cathedral** also the tragic emotions are created by the combination of the suffering of the Chorus and the sublimation of Becket. And there also Becket's Catastrophe is seen as part of a larger divine design.

The similarity between **Cilappatikāram** and **Antony and Cleopatra** in this respect is more significant from our point of view. Throughout the play we have this man-woman dichotomy[62] and we find the masculine Roman values being subordinated by the bewitching feminine values of the East and Antony's death is seen as a prelude to, or finds its completion in, the death of Cleopatra which is more a consummation than a catastrophe or a resolution. It is the faith of woman that transcends tragedy in both. Both ask for the cooperation of the elements and when Cleopatra in her great agony curses Rome, Kannaki brings fire into the city of Madurai and she appeals to the Sun god as well.[63]

Kannaki's determination to seek reunion with her husband beyond death can be compared to Cleopatra's determination to meet Antony in the Cydnus.[64] Whereas Kannaki says that she cannot find peace unless she meets her husband again,[65] Cleopatra says:

> Methinks I hear
> Antony call. I see him rouse himself
> To praise my noble act. I hear him mock
> The luck of Caesar, which the gods give men
> To excuse their after wrath, Husband, I come![66]

Just as Kannaki thinks of the gate through which she came to Madurai with her husband,[67] Cleopatra is also reminded of the Cydnus where she met Antony first and she is "again for Cydnus to meet Mark Antony".[68] There are differences, but both Kannaki and Cleopatra have now a transcendental faith through love which helps them to defy time and death. Whereas the mythopoeic imagination of Ilango makes the aspiration a reality, in Shakespeare it is only a vision, but it has also its own reality. In the beginning the lovers seek a new heaven and a new earth in a jocular mood. But in the end the earth is made unreal in Cleopatra's transformed vision. Here we find the secular interpretation of the Apocalypse and the promised earth is not a transcendent location in the eternity, but merely a purged and renovated form of the earth we inhabit. Love is seen in a transcendental dimension and the circuitous structure which sees in the end a deepening of the significance of the beginning has also a Biblical origin.[69] In **King Lear** also we have Lear's vision of Cordelia coming to life and Kent's obedience to his master's call. We have already made a reference to Lear's regeneration through Cordelia's love. When Cordelia apperars before him as Lear awakens after his restorative sleep, Lear says:

> You do me wrong to take me out O' the grave;
> Thou art a soul in bliss: I am bound
> Upon a wheel of fire[70]

It is significant that Lear uses the word "grave" here and there is also the suggestion of purgatorial fire. Sleep can be taken as symbolic of death and when he awakens, he is almost reborn through the love of Cordelia. Later the dead Cordelia seems to stir to life through the power of his love. But it is only in **Antony and Cleopatra** we find woman's faith given an importance comparable to Ilango's in **Cilappatikāram.** And significantly in the last plays where tragedies are averted we have symbolic death and revival through the love and faith of woman.

We can also find a parallel between Devanthi's attachment to Kannaki and Charmian's to Cleopatra.Devanthi comes all the way to Madurai and her pathetic cry makes Kannaki appear in the divine shape and with a note of old intimacy she calls them all to play in the hills, saying that she will be eternally playing on the hills of **venvelan.**[71] We can compare this with Cleopatra's words:

> And when thou hast done this chare, I will give thee leave
> To **play** till doomsday [72]

And Charmian also remembers it later:

> Your crown's awry
> I will mend it, and then play.[73]

But Cleopatra, with all her mythic dimensions and desire to dissolve into fire, is still of the earth.

To sum up, there are differences between Shakespeare's treatment of tragic women and that of Ilango in so far as Shakespeare's women are subordinated to men and the tragedy is related to their inability to act; nor are they capable of the total triumph of Kannaki. In Ilango, woman is the peak of evolution and Kovalan's tragedy is part of the sublimation of Kannaki and this gives a climactic structure to **Cilappatikāram.** But in both they stand for transcendence through love and if Ilango saw women as manifestation of Sakti, Shakespeare also was alive to their divinity in his own way and in both, the emphasis on the creative and regenerative aspects of the cosmic order synchronises with the cult of woman and love. Lastly, it is most significant that in **Antony and Cleopatra,** which marks the end of Shakespeare's tragic period, the heroine is endowed with a mythic dimension defying death and time. There is also the neutralisation of impulses -- if Kovalan can be associated with pity, Kannaki can be associated with terror and if Kovalan stands for man's helplessness Kannaki becomes the cosmic power. The compound may not be the same as in Shakespearean tragedy, but for that matter, we do not find the same tragic experience even in two tragedies of Shakespeare himself.

CHAPTER V

THE COSMIC TRAGEDY: NATURE MYTHS

Eventhough Shakespeare and Ilango are explicitly concerned only with ethics and man's relationship with his fellow men, in both, the human drama is also related to a transcendental order of which nature is one of the manifestations. Already we have discussed their treatment of man in relation to a moral order of which he is a part and to which he also contributes. Parallel to the question of man in relation to the moral order is man in relation to the universe and they are not different questions, but aspects of the same question, just as nature and the moral law are only different aspects of the same reality. In this chapter an attempt will be made to study the place of nature in the tragic universe of Shakespeare and Ilango.

It is interesting to note in the beginning that the English word **nature** and its Tamil counterpart **Iyarkai**[1] have acquired multiple significances, and their semantic history would have an important place in the history of 'Ideas'. I.A. Richards in his discussion of Coleridge has expressed his dissatisfaction with having to select out of the multitudinous variety only a few significances, "I am considering here only some chief members of the Western nineteenth-century group of **Natures.** If we took account of Western senses in general--still more if we included Indian and Chinese conceptions--a vastly more intricate and more diverse collection would require treatment. That we continue to ignore all but relatively parochial meanings here in a world which is manifestly closing--almost weekly into one (at present, self-destructive) society, is evidence chiefly of our inadequate technique in comparative studies".[2] And he has referred to four of the senses, which ultimately can be reduced to three (I, II, and IV in his classifi-

cation). I. The influences of whatever kind, to which the mind is subject from whatever is without and independent of itself, II. Those 'images', 'figments', 'things', 'existences' or 'realities', which through the perceptive and imaginative activities of the mind (in response to I), we take to be the world in which we live . . . . III (IV in his classification), A . . . . narrower selection from II including only such of them as are required at any stage in the theoretical development of physics for the purpose of giving an account of Nature in Sense I".[3] According to Basil Willey: "An American scholar has distinguished more than a hundred meanings, and even in the seventeenth century Robert Boyle listed eight senses in which it was used by natural philosophers. Of these the most interesting were (1) The Author of Nature or God; (2) A semideity or personification, subordinate to god, but often spoken of as the sole immediate cause of phenomena and thus often replacing the idea of God as a principle of explanation; (3) The established course of things--the settled and unalterable order of the universe; (4) The essence or Quiddity of a thing, that which makes it what it is; or (5) of a human being, the qualities which a man has at birth, i.e. when from the hands of god, before education and convention have done their work upon him".[4] We can compare it with Prof.Thaninayagam's reference to a similar problem in Tamil. "The Tamil word **Iyarkai** has had from the earliest times a great number of meanings. It denotes the established order of the universe as well as what proceeds from the essence as well as the disposition of man or matter. It is opposed to **Seyarkai** or what is fabricated, and artificial. Through the centuries, the word has acquired new semantic adumbrations, and the actual period when it becomes to denote the physical universe has not been traced".[5]

Where do Shakespeare and Ilango come in this picture? Critics have referred to the divorce between the ethical and entological dimensions of the words, **kind** and **nature** since the Elizabethan age[6] and **King Lear** has been described as the battle ground in which two interpretations of nature are struggling for primacy.[7] The most important of senses in Shakespearean usage seem to be the following:-

(a)A transcendental law which includes and interpenetrates man and the cosmos (nature), (b)human nature and its affections with an undercurrent of sense (a), (c)phenomenal nature with an undercurrent of sense(a), (d)mechanical or malicious nature, (e) unregulated instincts and appetit es. Here we see the narrowing as well as degeneration in the

semantic significance of the term. The first sense is the most comprehensive one and the one in which Hooker uses it. Nature is God's deputy and Nature rules over those domains each of which is a reflection of the others, since they are all parts of the same ordered unity. She rules over the universal world, she rules over the world of created objects on earth and she rules over the world of human government, of man in society.[8] Senses (b) and (c) are related and they show the beginning of the split between man and nature, and both begin to lose their kinship with the divine. And in senses (d) and (e) which are again related, we find a further widening of the gap between man and nature, and also a corresponding gap between both and the divine. But even in senses (b),(c), and (d) and (e) we find the interdependence of the two, man and nature, and the suggestion of a common principle informing both. Even phenomenal nature(c) is made to have moral and human association and to that extent partakes of, or symbolises, the transcendental order and we will be concerned mainly with this aspect.

M.H.Abrams has demonstrated that the age-old three-term frame of reference of man, nature and god is reduced to a two-term frame of reference of man and nature in Wordsworth.[9] But we can see the process already being begun in Shakespeare. Of course, in Shakespeare we do not have so much explicit emphasis on the divinity of nature and man as we find in Wordsworth and the gods are also there, whereas in Wordsworth they are completely subsumed in the other two. But even in Shakespeare, gods seem to be only on the periphery of human consciousness, or atleast they are not powerful enough and nature does not simply denote the amoral energies of the universe. But the real difference is that in Shakespeare nature is not as explicitly educative as in Wordsworth. Again it is the benign aspect of nature that is given more importance in Wordsworth and even the Fall of Man does not seem to alter it very much. And lastly, in Wordsworth, nature seems to be a more comprehensive term than man and even when he is concerned with the human bonds, he refers to them only as 'natural pieties'. Whereas Shakespeare refers to 'the milk of human kindness'[10] we find Wordsworth referring to the natural piety and natural hearts.[11]

This tendency is found in Coleridge also and **The Rime of the Ancient Mariner** exemplifies this beautifully and a comparison of **King Lear** with **The Rime of the Ancient Mariner** will be useful in this connection. In **King Lear** the violation of the human pieties precedes the chaos in the natural order. In the **Ancient Mariner** it is the killing of

the albatross that precedes his experience of the 'dead' universe. It is true that the albatross is described in human terms, and the crime of the Mariner is against nature, man and God, but it is only a crime against nature to start with. Again the recovery in **King Lear** is preceded by Lear's response to humanity whereas in **The Ancient Mariner** his recovery is preceded by his gushing love towards the creatures of the sea.[12]

Eventhough there is this difference in emphasis between Shakespeare on the one hand and Wordsworth and Coleridge on the other, we find in them a fundamental affinity, because to all of them to be natural is to be human and to be human is to be natural. Surprisingly we find this process indicated by Marx also: "Communism as a fully developed naturalism is humanism and as a fully developed humanism is naturalism. It is the **definitive** resolution of the antagonism between man and nature, and between man and man . . . .It is solution of the riddle of history and knows itself to be this solution....

"The **human** significance of nature only exists for social man, because only in this case is nature a bond with other **men.** Only then is nature the basis of his own human experience and a vital element of human reality. The **natural** existence of man has here become his human existence and nature itself has become **human** for him. Thus society is the accomplished union of man with nature, the veritable resurrection of nature, the realised naturalism of man and the realised humanism of nature".[13] This we can juxtapose with Coleridge's statement in order to see the similarities in and differences between the two approaches. To Coleridge, "Art is the mediatress and reconciler of man and nature. (It is) the Union and reconciliation of that which is nature with that which is exclusively human".[14] Both look forward to a brotherhood of man based on man's restored kinship with nature; but Coleridge and Shakespeare are more concerned with the spiritual powers in man than economic power and its consequences.

But what is most interesting to us is that such diverse minds are agreed upon the interplay of the human and the natural, of course in different degrees. According to Theodore Spencer, great literature is possible only in certain times when man has been concerned with not only relationship with his fellowmen, but also with himself and the universe.[15] Schweitzer also emphasises this when he says: "The great fault of all ethics hitherto has been that they believed themselves to have to deal only with the relations of man to man. In reality, however, the question is what is his attitude

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to the world and all life that comes within his reach? A man is ethical only when life as such is sacred to him, that of plants and animals as that of his fellowmen and when he devotes himself helpfully to all life that is in need of help. Only the universal ethic of the feeling of responsibility in ever-widening sphere for all that lives, only that ethic can be founded in thought. The ethic of the relation of man to man is not something apart by itself, it is only a particular relation which results from the universal one".[16]

Both Shakespeare and Ilango see the human tragedy in relation to the beautiful and permanent forms of nature and this enhances the ethical significance of both. In both Shakespeare and Ilango, man and nature are postulated as independent entities, but there is a healthy interaction between the two. In Shakespearean tragedies there is a development in his attitude to nature. **Romeo and Juliet** marks the transition in this respect also and it is interesting to note that Shakespeare's growing interest in human tragedy and the reality of human passion should synchronise with the growth of his greater interest in nature, because as Clemen has pointed out, in **Romeo and Juliet** as opposed to the earlier plays where references to nature are incidental, it "is referred to again and again by the imagery, accompanies the whole action of the play almost symbolically".[17] That Shakespeare perceived a link between love, deathlessness and nature is clear in this pattern. Clemen refers to the **direct** expression of love in **Romeo and Juliet** in the Garden scene and the Balcony scene: "For these scenes bring the secret converse of the lovers freed from their conventional environment and distraction, but one with the heart of nature".[18] When they are true to their inner-most nature, they are also surrounded with nature. And we also find in this play the beginning of man's personal relationship with nature which is further developed in later tragedies.[19]

But again there is transition within the play itself as Clemen has pointed out. Most of the descriptions in the earlier part are undramatic; they do not reveal the speakers' moods or character and they are purely descriptive and conventional. The dialogue between Benvolio and Montague in the opening scene would illustrate this:

Benvolio:

Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd Sun
Peer'd forth the golden window of the east
A troubled mind drew me to walk abroad...

Montague:

But all soon as the all-cheering sun
Should in the farthest east begin to draw
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,[20]

In Ilango's tragedy also we feel nature's presence most intensely and there also we find this development from description to drama. There are very elaborate and not quite dramatic descriptions of nature in the earlier **Kātais** of **Cilappatikāram.** We can find a close parallel to Benvolio's speech in Ilango's description of the rising sun in **Intira Vilavūr Eṭutta Kātai.** "The Sun that illuminates the world by rising up on the peak of the hills and removing the blanket of darkness which hides the body of the maid Earth with such an expansive space, who has the sea as her garb, the hills as her breasts, the rivers as the chain decorating her chest and the clouds as her hair".[21]

We can also compare Friar Lawrence's description:

The grey-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night.
Check' ring the eastern clouds with streaks of light;
And fleckel'd darkness like drunkard reels
From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels[22]

with Ilango's description in **Antimālaic Cirappuc Cey Kātai** in which there is a similar battle between darkness and light (of course here that of the crescent moon) and darkness yields to the triumphant entry of the crescent moon.[23] This is suggestive of the warfare between Kannaki and Madhavi and it thereby links the human situation with a universal battle similar (but opposed) principles.

Both in Shakespeare and Ilango this tendency for elaborate description later yields place to more organic description. The references to nature in **Hamlet, Othello** and **Macbeth** are most suggestive of the moods of the speakers. Horatio's description of the sunrise[24] and Banquo's description of the Castle exemplify this point.[25] Here we find a greater condensation in the description, and nature becomes inseparably intertwined in the human consciousness and the milieu becomes purely psychological and the rhythms of the universe are enacted there. This process can be found in Ilango also. The earlier Katais, particularly in **Pukārk Kānṭam,** begin with the descriptions of the milieu and the descriptions are very elaborate whereas such purely descriptive passages are fewer in **Madurai Kānṭam;** but nature

seems to be closer to the human protagonists later. But even in **Pukārk Kāṇṭam** nature imagery is made dramatic whenever necessary especially in **Kānal Vari** where not only the Cauvery is almost a participant in the human drama but also there is a fusion of the objective reality and the subjective vision and the songs bring out Madhavi's deeper humanity. The awakening of her motherly sense and her capacity for transcending the self are suggested in the imagery of her description:

"Long live the Cauvery, because you don't swerve from the timeless service of a mother to your husbands' child, i.e. the land. But that service of yours is only due to the mercy of the life-cherishing king of light; therefore, live for ever".[26] But generally speaking, nature is seen through the human consciousness only later in Ilango and this development is more conspicuous in Shakespeare.

In Shakespeare we can say that this evolution in technique corresponds to an evolution in vision. We find the nature-man dichotomy slowly narrowing in the tragic universe of Shakespeare. In **Julius Caesar, Hamlet and Othello** we find the human tragedy being anticipated in nature and the disturbances in the universe precede the disturbances in the microcosm; the storm in **Othello** and the eruptions in the natural order in **Julius Caesar** and **Hamlet**[27] seem to signify this. But this should not be mistaken to mean that man's violence to nature precedes man's violation of human pieties. It is the breaking of human bonds and the human tragedy that is anticipated. It is the human act that initiates the chaos in nature also. In **Hamlet** the sin of Claudius and Gertrude has already affected the cosmos. In **Julius Caesar** too not only has the moral landscape been affected by the human act of Pompey's murder but also we see the seeds of evil being thrown in the mind of Brutus. In **Othello**, too, the Iago evil precedes the storm in the order of appearance in the play. In **Macbeth** also the day is both fair and foul, but this is universe coloured by the dormant evil within, struggling with good.[28]

In all these cases nature not only responds to the human act, but it has also a premonition of the human tragedy. But in spite of all this, it is also an independent order; it derives its significance through the human. Both seem to be divided aspects of one reality suggesting a synthesis, Horatio's description of the rising Sun and Banquo's description of the Castle are significant; they reflect the moods of the human speakers, but they also testify to the existence of an order beyond the human, and both suggest possibilities of perpetuation and renewal of life.

In the **Hamlet** passage, nature seems to be anxious to announce the reassertion of positive values and renewal of life through and beyond death.[29] F.R.Leavis's analysis of the Castle passage in **Macbeth** strengthens this view. "But more; its 'pendent bed secure' above the dizzy drop, is its 'procreant cradle', and 'procreant' is enforced by breeds; all these suggestions uniting again with those of 'temple' and 'heaven' evoke the contrast to foul murder-life springing swift, keen and vulnerable from the hallowed source".[30] And T.B.Tomlinson is also of the view that such passages suggest life arising out of death and negation and this according to him is one of the two most important interrelated and largely neglected insights that modern criticism at its best has arrived at.[31]

It is true that this approach provides a better basis for considering Shakespearean tragedies as "an establishing of values as well as a recognition of tragic waste.[32] But it is more than that: these passages establish a vaster (and eternal) order of reality beyond the human which is profoundly involved with it, is affected by it and asserts itself in spite of the temporary check to the current of life. The knocking of the Porter is a human counterpart to this cosmic assertion, and in the arrival of Fortinbras and Malcolm we have the parallel assertion in the body politic.

Nature appears to be a dumb sister to the human protagonists; it has a deeper mode of perception; it only lacks a language. The river Vaigai has a premonition of the death of Kovalan, and the mother earth is supposed to perceive the tragedy earlier and Kannaki is pouring water to awaken her from the swoon.[33] In **Āycciyar Kuravai** the routine life is renewed in Madurai after, and in spite of, the great individual tragedy, but nature is struggling under the weight of the human sin and there are clamities every where.[34] Kannaki's sorrow is shared in anticipation by the cosmos and the ecstatic dance-cum-song of the **shepherdesses** can be taken as a correlative to the inarticulate agony of the cosmos over the violent death of Kovalan.

In **King Lear** we have the culmination in this respect also. Nature here becomes almost a participant and it is the human act which initiates the disturbance in the universe, but nature feels it in advance and when Lear leaves home it looks as though the raging storm was waiting for him to join and both together rave and rage. The violation of nature at the human level has resulted in, and is accompanied by, the fury in the phenomenal nature, which is symbolic of the cosmic wrath. When he asks "What is the cause of

the thunder?"[35] it is only another version of the other question "Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts?"[36] and both are related. The lonely individual's cry reverberates through the cosmos and Lear in his part seems to act out the agony of the universe. Lear seems to be helpless before the angry heavens, but the human protagonist attains a grandeur in juxtaposition with the vast elements and his figure seems to match the heavens. Both Lear and the cosmos seem to be caught in a war embrace and he seems to discover a deeper affinity with it through struggle and strife. Lear's experience of alienation from nature is parallel to his isolation at the human level and when he identifies himself with the wretched creatures, he discovers an identity with nature also.[37] In the moment of terror love gushes forth in his heart and in nature also we find the storm subsiding into purifying rains. There is a terror in cosmic love and Lear experiences the terror-in-love through various stages and till the final moment this intertwining is there in the play. In the beginning he sees more terror than love and later there is more of love. Cordelia's love is accompanied by the purifying rains. It is significant that Cordelia is asking all the unpublished virtues of the earth to spring with her tears and the aidant and remediate in the good man's distress.[38] Here we find the linking of regenerative powers in the cosmos and the human heart and both could be taken as symbolic of the emerging of divine love through terror.

Wordsworth suggests a parallel here. He sees in the Alpine landscape a mingling of sublimity and love. To quote M.H.Abrams, "And this **Coincedentia oppositorium** suddenly expresses a revelation which Wordsworth equates with the showing forth of the contraries of God in the Apocalypse, the Book of Revelation itself. There the Lamb of the gospel of love had manifested Himself as the terrifying deity of the **dies irae,** while men cried to 'the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and hide us . . . . from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come;' but the opening and closing chapters had insistenly reiterated that the God of wrath and destruction is one and coeternal with the God who manifests his love in the creation at the beginning and in the redemption at the end of time: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending;" "Fear not, I am the first and the last;" "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and and the last".[39] At one level we see those contraries experienced by Lear both as fury and love at the cosmic and human levels. Even in his final vision of Cordelia we see the mingling

of terror and love. And at another level even in Lear we can see both the aspects of terror and love in that order, whereas in Cordelia we have love and awe in that order. Aesthetically it is also possible to associate Lear primarily with terror and Cordelia with love. Following Abrams on Wordsworth, we may say that 'in the final accounding not only the beautiful but the sublime turns out to issue from love[40] and this can also be related, as Abrams does, to Dante's concept of the primal love supernal which not only subsumes and justifies but necessitates the pain imposed on man by God's wrath and Eliot's formulation: 'Who then devised the torment? Love.' But the difference between Dante and Eliot on the one hand and Shakespeare on the other is obvious. In Shakespeare it is brought out mainly in human terms as human love divine.

In Ilango also there is the juxtaposition of the cosmos and man, but here there is more harmony and man seems to evolve from the cosmic setting into a cosmic force. In most of the **Kātais** the poet starts with the sky and proceeds down to earth and the human protagonists who occupy the central position there. This pattern is most obvious in **Mankaḷa Vāḻttup Pātal** and **Antimālaic Cirappuc Cey kātai** and the pattern seems to suggest evolution, but at the same time it makes the human consciousness the peak of this evolution.[41] The very beginning starts with an invocation to the Moon, the Sun, the Rains and Poompukar and the human drama seems to evolve from the sky.[42] The Moon could symbolise the feminine or creative principle of the universe and the Sun the masculine principle of the universe, the rains could signify fertility or love and Poompukar could stand for human civilization which is the peak of this evolution. In the structure of the whole Kātai also we have this pattern; from the hills we come down to the lovers; (love being the highest value in this evolutionary process) and at the end of the Kātai there is again the reference to the hills, but it is subordinated to the human power. It is both a downward and an upward movement; the earth is evolving from the heavens but it also reaches the heavens and partakes of that eternal order it symbolises. One is reminded of Hardy's Edgon Heath: "There the form stood motionless as the hill beneath. Above the plain rose the hill, above the hill rose the barrow and above the barrow rose the figure".[43] And this evolutionary concept is revealed in the overall structure of the work also. There is a downward movement in Kannaki's fortunes which is also a climactic movement. She is an instrument of the cosmic power, but by that very process she also becomes that power. If there is reconciliation with the cosmic power in **King Lear**, there is complete fusion

in **Cilappatikāram.** In Kannaki also we have terror and love and she experiences also the terror and love of god, but the emphasis is not on strife but reconciliation. In Shakespeare there is the interpenetration of the cosmos with the human and the individual is symbolic of the cosmic. In Ilango the individual becomes the cosmic.

In **Antony and Cleopatra** there is a greater fusion of the microcosm with the macrocosm and Cleopatra is closer to the cosmic power. Juliet, Macbeth and Cleopatra are closer to the cosmic power and they address the elements in a more intimate manner. Of course Lear also addresses the elements but there is more tension there but in Juliet and Lady Macbeth there is more of identification, and in Cleopatra this is fully developed and this is also a sign of mythic consciousness. Antony too uses elemental imagery, but Cleopatra seems to represent a more intuitive level and she is almost identified with Isis.[44] Already reference has been made to the mythic and epic dimensions of **Antony and Cleopatra** in other respects and this cohesion with the cosmos and the superhuman dimension of the human protagonists also go to confirm it.

The nature-myth is the undercurrent of all Shakespearean tragedies. In **Romeo and Juliet** we have examples of myth-making in the descriptions of the sunrise already referred to. But the war between darkness and light is subordinated to the conflict between hatred and love. In the **Hamlet** passage the Sun rising slowly on the hill is described in human and homely imagery as a peasant clad in russet mantle walking over the dew of yon eastward hill. Here the ancient myth of regeneration and renewal through light and warmth is given a new version. David Daiches contrasts this description with "the rosy-finger dawn" of Homer, and says that in Shakespeare dawn is described as Life Force quietly setting about the profound business of keeping life going.[45] The eastward hill, according to him, reverberates with Edenic and other associations and the image appeals to mythic consciousness in all of us.[46] But he comes to the conclusion that Shakespearean tragedies are not myths and says, "**King Lear** is not a myth though we may trace mythical patterns in it, eventhough the presence of the mythical pattern in it may help to explain the profundity and the universality of the tragedy".[47] But is **King Lear** a myth?

Prof.G.S.Kirk has repudiated the view that myths are about Gods or demi-gods. Malinowski's theory that myths are sacred tales about rituals has also been found inadequate and he comes to this conclusion: "What I have tried to point

out is not of course, an error in observation, but rather the persistent and distorting application of a false preconception, namely that 'myth' is a closed category with the same characteristics in different cultures. Once one sees that myth, as a general concept is completely vague, that it implies no more itself than a traditional story, then it becomes clear that its restriction to particular kinds of tale, 'sacred' ones or those associated with rituals, is precarious and misleading; especially if the tendencies of one culture in this respect are assumed to be analogous to those of a'' other cultures at roughly the same material and social level. It is, indeed, important to remember that different cultures **are** different, that the common preoccupations c` mankind (with birth and death, food and sex, war and machines) do not express themselves in the same way or the same proportion from culture to culture--'general theories' of myth and ritual are no simple matter".[48]

This would help us to conclude that myths could fulfil various functions and take various forms, and great tragedies evolve into literary correlatives to myths: "The myth is a fragment of the soul-life, the dream-thinking of a people as the dream is the myth of the individual".[49] In **King Lear** we have the crystallisation and culmination of a myth in the dramatic mode and in that process it has absorbed several characteristics of a myth. It is less a statement than an agent and it appeals to nondiscursive mode of understanding. According to Cassirer as expounded by Susanne Langer, "mythic symbols do not give rise to discursive understanding; they do beget a kind of understanding, but not by sorting out concepts and relating them in a distinct pattern; they tend, on the contrary, merely to bring together great complexes of related ideas in which all distinctive features are merged and swallowed".[50]

So, in the making of **King Lear** we see what Kirk refers to as the process of a folk tale or legend becoming a myth by a secondary processs of development, "acquiring in the course of tradition those overtones of fantasy that many other myths possess from the beginning, by virtue of their subjects themselves or of the essential involvement of supernatural powers".[51] In **King Lear** we find the convergence of several trends. A contemporary event has been pushed into a timeless past. The milieu is made vague and remote and the Christian associations of the original story have also been purged.[52] This distancing is an important feature of myths: "For myths specific, though they may be in their characters and local setting are usually envisaged as taking place in a timeless past".[53] Not only there is a timeless stillness about most

of the crucial scenes of the play, but its texture and structure also consciously aim at a primitive simplicity, but it is the simplicity of the most highly developed art. We can see something akin to what, some folk lorists say as the "rebarbarisation of literature" here,[54] in so far as **King Lear** has assimilated several of the folk tale techniques in its structure and texture and this pattern is continued in **Antony and Cleopatra** and the last plays also.

We may therefore say that in **King Lear** we have the culmination of a new myth. Kirk sees two stages in the evolution of Greek myths: "Normally when people speak of Greek mythology they are thinking, partly of Homer, but partly of the forms given to them by Greek tragedy . . . . . . Literary reinterpretation of myths reached a climax in the drama of the fifth century, when a fresh version of the mythical world was constructed, profounder and more subtle in thought and action than it had been for centuries, perhaps even before".[55] "And so there may be said to be two separate stages of conscious manipulation of Greek myths; the long stage of selection and codification culminating in Homer and Hesiod, and the stage of reinterpretation carried through especially by the great tragedians of the fifth century. They took the transitional and schematised mythology as a datum and with new interests constructed out of it an erratic but vivid new world of myths in which the preoccupations of the contemporary society were reflected, against the background of traditional narrative situations".[56]

Applying this to the Shakespeare situation we may say that in **King Lear** we have a reinterpretation of an original tale embodying the idea of the evolution of family and dramatising the primitive jealousies between the parents and the children into a modern myth on power and love and this can be ultimately derived from the myth of the dying god. The theme of the breaking of bonds in the society due to the rise of the economic man with his endless quest for power is parallel to, and superimposed on, the theme of the evolution of the family in which a patriarchal head resists the assertion of the daughters' otherness and ultimately it can be related to the myth of the dying god. **King Lear's** imagery suggests parallelism to the dismemberment of Osiris and the dead king is rejuvenated into life through the love of his daughter. This can be related to the descent of Ishtar or Persephone to save their male counterparts. Hence we can say that in Shakespearean tragedies we have a process parallel to that of Attic tragedies which had absorbed and modified earlier myths. But in **King Lear** the associations with the fertility myth can be only dimly perceived and

explicitly it gives importance only to the human theme. The primitive mind saw a parallel between life and death and the cosmic process in nature. The association of the seasonal cycle in the growth of the grain and of the vine, and of vegetation in general, with death and the after life, was very prominent in the Greek mind. What began as a fertility cult mainly concerned with the death and regeneration of the vegetation was later associated with the human situation also; but when we come to Shakespeare it is the human situation that is given prominence. And again it is not the reproductive energy of the cosmos, but man's capacity for love that is emphasised. The human situation and the cosmic cycles **are** related; but focus of attention has shifted.

This pattern is continued in **Antony and Cleopatra** which becomes more mythic in other respects also and it is completed in the later plays. **Antony and Cleopatra** can be described as the Shakespearean version of the myth of Isis. Critics have referred to the fact that the play abounds in allusions to classical mythology. Cleopatra is associated with the Nile and Isis.[57] Antony's association with the fire that gives fecundity to the soil is very significant.[58] The constant association of Cleopatra with the Nile is suggestive of the fact that she symbolises the regenerative (not in any moral sense) principle of the universe. The reference to the rise and fall of the Nile is particularly significant. This can be associated with the intimate connection between the resurrection of Osiris and the annual renewal in nature signified by the rise and fall of the Nile. But here again, as in **King Lear,** the fertility myth is subordinated to what we may call the myth of love and the human heart. We find Antony and Cleopatra dying for each other to be reborn through love. The dying Antony being lifted up and stirred to the last flicker of life by Cleopatra can be taken as a Shakespearean parallel to the resurrection of Osiris.

This can be related to Horowitz's suggestion about the last plays: "The myth behind these romances is the myth of Ceres and Proserpina, of a mother and child whose bond reaches down into the darkness of the underworld, whose separation is winter and whose reunion brings the return of spring".[59]

Frazer's intuition of the idea of immortality being embodied in the myth has been confirmed by recent scholars: "The germinating wheat would be at once the symbol of the harvest of the grain and of the immortality of human soul, falling into the ground and dying in order to bring forth much fruit either here or hereafter, like the corn which

the Athenians sowed on their graves. A corn token symbolism would be in keeping with the idea of rebirth alike in nature and in man".[60] But the idea of immortality that we find in Shakespeare has different connotations--it is related to man's capacity to transcend death through love. Here again Wordsworth continues the tradition of Shakespeare in poems like **Michael.** We see Michael being reborn through his child and his being sustained by love.[61] Shakespeare also is concerned with the endless regenerative power of love, and man is deathless only in his capacity for love. According to Arnold Toynbee, "Love cannot save a human being from suffering death, but needs no resurrection of the life that has been laid down, since self-sacrifice for the sake of love is an end in itself. Absolute love is absolute goodness, and this is self-sufficing. It is what it is, whether or not it is also omnipotent, . . . Love cannot save life from death, but it can fulfil life's purpose; and in so far as life's purpose has been fulfilled, its fulfilment cannot be undone by death, when death puts an end to life itself . . . In this sense love is stronger than death".[62] This seems to be the truth which is embodied in the Lear-Cordelia situation at the end. **Cordelia's death** could not be **averted,** but Lear's love can **transcend** it momentarily and in that expansion of love, death becomes null and void.

Milton also exploits the Persephone myth in **Paradise Lost** and in a crucial passage he refers to Persephone's search for her daughter.[63] There the mother's love for the lost child is given importance and that signifies the quest of the divine love for the 'lost' humanity. But in Shakespeare the emphasis is on human love (shall we add 'divine?'). To sum up, in Shakespeare we find the fertility myth giving place to the myth of love because it is the fertility of the heart that is emphasised.

In **Cilappatikāram** also we have a parallel process. Not only do we see myth-making processes in the descriptions of nature in **Antimālaic Cirappuc Cei Kātai** and **Intira Viḻavūr Eṭutta Kātai** but the entire story is related to the vegetation myths of Muruga and Rama and the whole epic evolves into a relatively modern myth of fertility and love.

Cilappatikāram shows a very close parallel to **King Lear** and **Antony and Cleopatra,** particularly to the former, in this respect. Here also we have a folk-tale culminating in a literary myth.

The relationship between myth, folk-lore and written literary forms is very complicated and **Cilappatikāram** seems

to be a Kurushetra in which these kinsmen are engaged in a profound war embrace. We have already referred to the impact of the folk songs on the evolution of its genre. Like **King Lear, Cilappatikāram** is also a literary myth evolving from the folk tales and it has absorbed also the characteristics of folk songs. Just as **King Lear's** immediate concern was with the chaos in the contemporary society due to the rise of capitalism, but it is also related to a parallel crisis in the earlier stage in the evolution of family and ultimately to the myth of Demeter, **Cilappatikāram** also had a contemporary problem in the sexual corruption of man, but it is also related to the dissolution of the matriarchal society, and its protest against the new order (as it was elaborated in the earlier chapter) and ultimately it is related to the myth of Sita. Sita like Demeter is a vegetation goddess and, after being separated from Rama by the Pluto-like Ravana, is reunited with him both by Rama's heroism and her faith. But in **Cilappatikāram** we have a modification--here we have human beings instead of gods and again it is the woman who brings salvation to her husband as against Sita whose role is subordinate to Rama's and whose function is to bring out Rama's glory and it is the latter who comes to her rescue also. If the **Rāmāyana** gives prominence to the martial heroism of Rama, here the emphasis is on the different type of heroism embodied in Kannaki. Again, there the god comes down to earth to save humanity; here it is humanity which becomes divine through love. E.O.James makes a similar distinction between the Assyrian and Sumerian myths on the one hand and the Egyptian on the other: "It was however the goddess in Mesopotamia who was the dominant force in this act of renewal, whatever form it took. The young god died annually in the rotation of the seasons and had to be rescued and restored from the land of the dead by his mother - lover. It was she who resuscitated him, and by so doing brought about the renewal of life on nature and in mankind. So in the last analysis, Inanna-Ishtar was the ultimate and constant source of regeneration, Dumuzi-Tammuz being only instrumental in the process as her agent. She was the embodiment of creative power in all its fulness; he was the personification of the decline and revival of vegetation and of all generative force".[64] "In Egypt however, it was the male solar deity as the heavenly father of the Pharaoh, not the Goddess who took the initiative because he was above all the life-giver".[65] Not only Kannaki and Kovalan are associated with Sita and Rama;[66] they are also associated with the Cauvery and the Sun. In **Kānal Vari,** the human drama is related to the eternal drama of the Cauvery and the Sun-God as represented by the Chola king.[67] The parallel between this and the Isis-Sun god myth embodied

in **Antony and Cleopatra** is most striking. Just as Antory is associated with fire that brings fecundity to the Egyptian soil, Kovalan (or Chola King) is associated with the heat of the Sun which alone makes the feminine fertility of the Cauvery possible. It is possible to see here a parallel to the struggle between the creative and sustaining principles of the universe, between Sakti and Shiva, or, in the Egyptian counterpart between Isis and the Sun.

Kannaki is also associated with other gods of fertility, particularly with Valli and indirectly with Muruga also. In **Kunrakkuravai**, the hill-men explicitly cali her Valli[68] and in the song they indirectly associate her with Muruga[69] who is associated with the fertility of the land and the heart. Kannaki also emerges as the symbol of regeneration of the land. The folks associate the sacrificing blood of the dying god with renewal of life. This suggests the theme of life beyond death and therefore it can be linked with vegetation myths which also signify it. But here again as in Shakespeare the focus of attention is only on the human drama-- but it is significant that both relate it to the existing mythical patterns. The theme of the regeneration of Kovalan as well as the regeneration of the land through Kannaki's sacrifice is linked with the Cauvery and the cosmic principle of regeneration embodied in Muruga. Kannaki is also seen to evolve from terror into love and this is made clear in her being first associated with Kotravai and then to Mayoon and finally to Muruga. And here also even Kotravai's terror is only a manifestation of love and Muruga is only the final revelation of that eternal love. But again as in Shakespeare, particularly in **King Lear**, they do not alter the law and to some extent they are subordinated to the human protagonists. If there is a principle of love (Sakti) and regeneration in the cosmos, there is also the impersonal law (Shiva) along with it. The human counterparts to this principle are Kannaki and Cordelia respectively both standing for charity and love. The difference between Shakespeare and Ilango is that cosmic love symbolised in Muruga is more explicitly brought out. In Ilango we find its counterpart in Kannaki's greater triumph.

Finally, we find Kannaki and Kovalan being associated with the Moon and the Sun.[70] Besides the explicit association of Kannaki and Kovalan with the Moon and the Sun in **Manai Aram Paṭutta Kātai**, we have also indirect suggestions of this affinity. The whole epic begins with an invocation to the Moon, the Sun, the Rains and the city of Poompuhar in that order.[71] A few lines later, Kannaki and Kovalan are described in that order. The order is significant. The Moon is a fertility God and, as already mentioned, it stands

for the feminine or creative principle of the universe, whereas the Sun is probably only the sustainer and it could stand for the male principle of the universe. And this would mean that the Kovalan-Kannaki story is related to the larger pattern embodied in the earlier myths of nature gods and the priority given to the Moon and Kannaki would signify the fact that the story is a new version of the Sakti cult and it demonstrates the primacy of the Sakti over the matter. This falls in line with our earlier contention that **Cilappatikāram** demonstrates the primacy of mercy and love over justice and fate (Chap.III) and of the matriarchal over the patriarchal head in the society (Chap.IV). It is interesting to note that just as both Shakespeare and Ilango make woman's love the peak of evolution, they are also alike in the discovery of the divine in nature and they are interrelated. As we have argued in the earlier chapter, Sakti is energy; Sakti is love, and ultimately Sakti is mercy. In the early Shakespearean comedies we find the glorification of energy and exuberant love. In the later romances we find the glorification of mercy and the tragedies point towards that and this is associated with regeneration in the world of nature as seen in **The Winter's Tale.** In **Cilappatikāram** too we find love and energy mellowing into charity in both Madhavi and Kannaki and in Kannaki we find this development to a greater extent as she is associated with the principle of regeneration in the cosmos. In Muruga himself we see this evolution -- the Bacchic god of energy becoming a symbol of love, charity and grace.

To conclude, we can say that 'both in Shakespeare and Ilango the human tragedy is related to the cosmic processes and there are similar principles governing both. The cosmos seems to be impelled by love and a principle of life beyond death. In both, the focus of attention is the human drama and nature deities and anthropomorphic gods are subordinated to the human protagonists in Ilango and nature is seen through the human consciousness in Shakespeare. In both it is the human act which affects the universe. If there is an oracle that Madurai will be burnt, it is related to a human act and the gods need the human for the fulfilment of the divine law; that is why the God of fire is made to obey the chaste woman in **Cilappatikāram.** The burning of Madurai is the fulfilment of an oracle; it is also the result of the deliberate action of Kovalan, completed by the consent of Kannaki.

The ambiguity is there in **Oedipus Rex** also and this is the central problem of humanity. This ambiguity does not solve, but only exposes a problem but the most important thing is that in both the universe is moral and it is affected

by ethical acts. To quote Frazer, "In her wrath at her bereavement the goddess suffered not the seed to grow in the earth, but kept it hidden under the ground, and she vowed that never would she set foot on Olympus and never could she let the corn sprout till her lost daughter should be restored to her. Vainly the Oxen dragged the ploughs to and fro into the fields; vainly the Sower dropped the barley seed in the brown furrows; nothing came up from the parched and crumbling soil. Even the Rarian piain near Eleusis, which was wont to wave with yellow harvests, lay bare and fallow. Mankind would have perished of hunger, and the gods would have been robbed of the sacrifices which were their due, if Zeus in alarm had not alarmed Pluto to disgorge his prey, to restore his bride Persephone to her mother Demeter".[72] The fertility myth overtly speaks about the drama of the death and rebirth of corn and suggests parallel with the human situation. In Shakespeare and Ilango it is the other way about. There is the suggestion of the gods being helpless before the power of love which permeates the universe in the originai myths also, but it is made more explicit in Shakespeare and Ilango. The suggestion of life beyond death signified by the eternal and joyous order of nature is also related to love explicitly in them. And significantly in both, the sense of triumph is related to a closer kinship between man and the cosmos.

But there are differences between Shakespeare and Ilango too. If both see an interdependence between man and nature, there is more of harmony in Ilango. Even in Shakespeare the tension suggests and leads on to a deeper synthesis, but the sense of alienation is there, particularly between the **hero** and the world of nature. If nature seems to be parallel to man in Shakespeare, there is a suggestion of human drama evolving from nature in Ilango. Closely connected with this is the fact that nature is more benign and regenerative in Ilango than in Shakespeare. Man's involvement in nature is suggestive of their discovery of the divine. The personal relationship with nature in both can also be taken as symbolic of the personal experience of a loving god in both. Secondly, if nature is divine in both, it is more explicit in Ilango than in Shakespeare. There are more of nature gods in Ilango; there are references to the god of woods, land and sea where the word **'teyvam'** has the connotation of the Greek genius and they are all ultimately related to the anthropomorphic vegetation deities such as Kotravai, Mayoon and Muruga. All this can be related to our general contention that in Ilango there is more of the mythic consciousness and the suggestion of the possibility of the human evolving into the divine.

CHAPTER VI

THE STILL DANCE: CATHARSIS VERSUS SĀNTHI

Aristotle's seminal phrase 'catharsis' has been not only the pivot on which the whole of **Poetics** revolves, but also the nucleus of all serious criticism on tragedy since then. Even when critics are not agreed on the exact significance of the term, there is a general feeling that it somehow sums up the aesthetic impact of tragedy better than any other term and therefore in this chapter it is proposed to compare the kinds of catharsis achieved by the two tragedians, Shakespeare and Ilango, and the means adopted by them therefor.

Our emphasis so far has been on the metaphysical content of the two tragedians, but now it would shift to their aesthetic effect. But it does not presuppose any fundamental dichotomy between the two. Ultimately in any work of art worth its name, the aesthetic value cannot be divorced from the content. As a matter of fact the theme expresses itself only in and through its form. Tragedy being an aesthetic product with a metaphysical foundation, all metaphysical enquiries have to lead on ultimately to an aesthetic synthesis. So in the early sections we studied the metaphysical core as revealed in the aesthetic product; now the attempt will be to study the aesthetic effects as derived from their metaphysical core or, to put it in other words, to study the bearings of their metaphysical core upon their aesthetics.

In fact the term 'catharsis' itself is the converging point of metaphysics and aesthetics eventhough Aristotle

himself has been accused of ignoring the metaphysical dimensions of tragedy in his famous definition. Murray Krieger among others has referred to this inadequacy: "All this about magnitude and completeness and catharsis -- are these to do justice to the profound complex of metaphysical forces which the tragic unleashes?"[1] He goes on to say that "it is finally Hegel who, after many centuries during which no radically new approaches are made to tragedy or at least none that are relevant to my interests here--takes up the task of explaining tragedy and catharsis in the thematic terms that Aristotle could afford to take for granted".[2] It might be true that in Hegel there is a greater emphasis upon the restoration of the moral order in the tragic universe and Aristotle is not very much concerned with it. But it is not true to say that Aristotle is concerned only with the formal aspects of tragedy and their psychological impact. There can be no purging of emotions unless we are affected by the metaphysical content but the only thing is that Aristotle does not equate experience in literature with that of life and he is concerned with the emotions intensified as well as distanced in art. Again, as Humphry House says, Aristotle is concerned with only those aspects of the craft of tragedy that can be taught.[3] Even Krieger hastens to add: "And who is to say that this restoration is not part of what may seem to be implied by the Aristotelian concept of denouement, a falling action which does not usually stop with the hero's final destruction but leads to a quiet beyond the grave; to a resettling of things in acceptance of this destruction?"[4] Hence it may not be wrong to conclude that Hegel is only making explicit what is there already in Aristotle's theory of tragedy, probably with a greater emphasis upon what Krieger refers to as "thematics" as well as the reconciling power of tragedy.

Let us look at Aristotle's crucial statement carefully. "Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being in separate parts of the play, in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions".[5] So, to Aristotle, at the highest level of abstraction, tragedy is characterised by two criteria: a) it is an imitation in the form of action and b) that should result in the proper purgation of the emotions of pity and fear.

And what are the components of that action which will result in this purgation? Aristotelian emphasis is on the orchestration of events, but the events in the lives of certain

types of men. Aristotle rules out the fall of completely good or wicked characters. He should not be eminently good, but he should be socially eminent. Butcher explains that this would result in a mixture of external dignity with recognisable humanity and the effect of the fall should be great in such eminence because of the contrast.[6] The inner likeness and the difference in outward conditions between the audience and the tragic protagonists would result in a detached involvement on the part of the audience and that would result in both the intensification and purification of our emotions. The king's predicament illustrates the combination of human greatness as well as weakness in a most intense manner and that is why their fall inspires pity and terror. Raymond Williams also refers to this aspect of the tragic hero: "The important element in the earlier emphasis on rank in tragedy was always the **general** status of the man of rank. His fate was the fate of the house or kingdom which he at once ruled and embodied. In the person of Agamemnon or of Lear the fate of a house or a kingdom was literally acted out."[7] So, the general representational nature of the king, and not his power, that was the cause of this choice. The other reason is that in him the passions can be magnified. Butcher also refers to the harmonious blending of the qualities in the characters of a tragedy; probably he is only referring to the purging of non-essentials in the artistic process and the kings become only intensely human because of their rank. But neither Butcher nor Raymond Williams has referred to the fact that there is a greater susceptibility to fall in greatness and Aristotle must have seen this proximity of greatness to tragic ruin. The fact that the seeds of destruction should be there in the very nature of greatness is a central tragic factor and it is this aspect which is elaborated in Bradley and James Joyce.

In Shakespeare we have no problem in this respect. His tragic heroes are peaks in the human landscape. Except Romeo and Othello all the other heroes are associated with royal families and these two also occupy an important position and the state is involved in their tragedy and so many are affected by them also. What matters is only the intensification of a universal human situation in the characters -- and kingship is a traditional symbol for this concept. Auerbach too emphasises this aspect of Shakespearean tragedy; "To be sure, all the characters whom Shakespeare treats in the tragic and sublime manner are of high rank. He does not, as the Middle Ages did, conceive of "everyman" as tragic. He is also more consciously aristocratic than Montaigne. In his work, "the **humane condition** is reflected very differently in the different classes, not only in practical terms, but

also from the point of view of aesthetic dignity".[8] He considers Shylock as a borderline case and his failure to attain tragic proportions is attributed to his social rank and his comic and senile fear which are associated with it. We may not completely agree with Auerbach's treatment of Shylock but his general contention is valid: "In any case he (Shakespeare) never renders them (the middle and lower classes) tragically. His conception of the sublime and tragic is altogether aristocratic".[9]

In **Cilappatikāram** the situation appears to be different -- neither Kannaki nor Kovalan has anything to do with the royal family and the tragic seems to be found in the domestic. Auerbach finds a similar contrast between Homer and the Old Testament.[10] It is true that Ilango refers to their social eminence. Kannaki is said to descend from the race of Mānāykan whose generosity is comparable only to that of the heavens[11] and Kovalan is described as the son of the equally generous Māsāttuvān who is said to possess wealth along with his peerless kinsmen of eminent families like that of the peerless king of the entire land.[12] And therefore according to the conventional norms of Western classification neither of them can be the hero or heroine of either a tragedy or an epic. In Tamil heroic poetry as well as love poetry which was predominantly lyrical before Ilango, membership in a royal family was not insisted upon, but only men and women of socially as well morally eminent families were considered to be fit for the heroic role. Even in Akam poetry the love of men in low status is ruled out and they are given a place only in **Kaikkiḷai** and **Peruntiṇai.**[13]

It is possible that social eminence was associated with moral excellence and because of that the commoners were excluded and in the early stages of history in all cultures we have this phenomenon. But probably in the Tamil tradition there was a greater emphasis on moral elevation and that we find most clearly in Kannaki. Incidentally, we can note that in **Cilappatikāram** we find a new synthesis due to the interpenetration of the heroic poetry and love poetry and the new compound is actually **Akam** or love poetry made heroic, as it is clearly illustrated in the emphasis on the heroism of the human heart and also the fact that something parallel to **Naṭukal** is built to commemorate this new type of heroism of **a woman.**

Butcher makes an important distinction between epic and dramatic poetry: "The epic poem relates a great and complete action which attaches itself to the fortune of a people, or to the destiny of mankind, and sums up the

life of a period. The story and the deeds of those who pass across its wide canvas are linked **with the larger movement** of which the men themselves are but a part. The particular action rests upon forces outside itself. The hero is swept into the tide of events. The hairbreadth escape, the surprises, the episodes, the marvellous incident of epic story, only partly depend on the spontaneous energy of the hero.

"The tragic drama, on the other hand, represents the destiny of the individual man. Action and character are here more closely intertwined . . . . It is but seldom that outward circumstances are entirely dominant over the forces of the spirit . . . . The element of chance is all but eliminated".[14] It is interesting to note then that in one important respect Butcher's description of an epic hero seems to be identical with the Marxist view of a tragic hero. According to Lukacs as expounded by Raymond Williams, "He is the world - historical individual, whose own particular purposes contain the substantial which is the will of the world - spirit".[15] Both Kannaki and Hamlet seem to be instruments in a national purgation as well as resurrection, and the rotten Denmark and the decadent Tamilnadu seem to have generated their own principle of salvation through Hamlet and Kovalan respectively.

It is very difficult to distinguish the epic hero from the tragic hero or at least that distinction becomes either impossible or irrelevant in the case of Kannaki. There is the movement of history through her, but she seems to be completely ignorant of it. She is both assertive and passive and if there is the downward movement in her fortunes there is also the corresponding upward movement in her power and ultimately there is the final honouring by humanity also. She is not conscious of her being an instrument of a higher power at all. When the Madurāpati goddess reveals to her that she has been only an instrument of fate when the act is over,[16] that brings only another conversion in her leading to a greater humility and charity which is again greater power and she also seems to transcend the power whose instrument she had been. If her humility in **Pukārk Kānṭam** can be taken as thesis and her fury in Madurai as antithesis, we have in Vañci the synthesis in her charity which is power. So the Aristotelian criterion of a tragic hero is here fulfilled in a different way; here too we have the combination of extraordinary power with ordinary humanity. In Northrop Frye's terminology **Cilappatikāram** is in one sense in the low mimetic mode, but that itself is on the borderland of myth in which the characters are almost divine and this interpenetration accounts for the uniqueness of

its genre.[17] We can compare this with the similar dilemma in classifying **Antony and Cleopatra** which has been called tragedy, history, satirical tragedy as well as heroic tragedy. Kannaki is both less and more than the tragic heroes of Shakespeare and, in her final moment of apotheosis, she retains her basic humanity which is revealed in her desire to call herself the **daughter** of the Pandiya King.[18]

Here again Cleopatra suggests a parallel. In her final speech critics have seen both an upward movement and a downward movement ending with the recognition of her basic humanity when she says "Dost thou not see my babe suck my breast?".[19] Again, before Kovalan leaves Kannaki to sell the anklet there is an idyllic scene of domestic harmony and this provides a contrast and a corrective to her sublime evolution very soon. In **Antony and Cleopatra** also we have a similar touching parting scene when Cleopatra fumbles in trying to buckle the armour of Antony, the great warrior.[20]

The generic nature in Kannaki's situation is brought out, when Ilango says in **Antimālai Cirappuc Cey Kātai** that not only Kannaki, but also other women suffered like this.[21] The parallelism with Kōpperundēvi also serves to intensify the universality of her situation. This technicue is more conspicuous in Shakespeare. The function of characters such as Gloucester in **King Lear**, Pompey in **Antony and Cleopatra** and Laertes and other secondary characters in **Hamlet** is not only to illuminate but also intensify the situation of the heroes. Probably it might be correct to say that in the epics we have the human situation in magnitude, and in the tragic hero we see it in its intensity and this can be related to the Aristotelian criteria of magnitude and concentration for the structure of the two.[22] But again they are not mutually exclusive and sometimes we have both as in the case of Kannaki.

There are also choric characters in Shakespeare and Ilango who give a perspective to the situation of the important characters as well as humanise them and thereby they serve as a link between the protagonists and the audience or readers. It is interesting to see that both in Shakespeare and Ilango there is an identity between the 'heroic' characters and the common folk. The grave-diggers in **Hamlet**, the soldiers, the clown and Enobarbus in **Antony and Cleopatra** and the Fool in **King Lear** are the most important of them in Shakespeare. The Grave-diggers scene seems to arrest the action temporarily and universalise Hamlet's situation and thereby it also distances it. The grave-diggers are closer

to reality because they know that every thing is an illusion and they bring home to Hamlet that life's meanings are made clear only in the graveyard. The graveyard provides a parallel as well as a contrast to the living world and the grave-diggers provide a parallel and a contrast to Hamlet. The graveyard exposes all our illusions and reveals the reality in a heap of ashes. Here is a recognition of the limitations as well as the oneness of humanity. And this comic insight of the detached grave-diggers is a parallel to the tragic wisdom of the 'new' Hamlet on the verge of death. Hamlet also recognises human limitations and the need for human togetherness to transcend it. In the 'living' world equivocation passes for truth and illusion for reality; in the grave-diggers' world truth is garbed in equivocation and reality is seen as illusion. In Henry James's phrase they are refelectors[23] and they also shape the audience's emotional response by subduing the growing tension and agony with comic detachment and serenity. In the robust laughter of the grave-diggers who are busy with the skulls, we see the life instincts being reconciled with the principle of death and this is symbolic of Hamlet's dying into life, and also our getting reconciled to the grand fact of death. Finally we can see here the juxtaposition of the heroic with the human in Hamlet and the grave-diggers and the mighty graveyard itself is a vast symbol of the heroic being reduced to the human. The appearance of the Clown in **Antony and Cleopatra** before the final elevation of Cleopatra does a similar function. In **Macbeth**, we have this technique in the introduction of the Porter, but it is more prominent only in **King Lear** and **Antony and Cleopatra.** The Fool in **King Lear** is a constant reminder of Lear's brittle creaturality and his comic detachment is a parallel to Lear's tragic involvement. But we see also a development. If in Lear involvement results in a detachment in the Fool we see the reverse because he gets more and more involved. And this pattern is repeated in the Antony-Enobarbus relationship in **Antony and Cleopatra.** Both the Fool and Enobarbus see more than their protagonists do and reduce their heroes to size. In a sense they are the alter-egos of the protagonists and they anticipate, and in a sense suffer, the impending tragedy of their heroes. In all this, particularly in the combination of ordinary humanity with an extra - ordinary insight (however dim it may be), they show a very close paralleiism with the chorus of the Greek tragedy. But there are differences too. They are more individualised than the Greek chorus and there is no comic element in the Greek chorus as well and these differences are very significant. The individualisation of the chorus in Shakspeare shows the evolution in the history of art -- even other characters are more individualised in Shakes-

peare and this is a sign of Shakespeare's involvement in the varied phenomena of life. This can be related to the fact that in Shakesspeare the concept of fate is also more closely interwoven with the individual characters. All this would make us agree with Hegel's view that modern tragedy is more personal than substantial[24] and also Raymond Williams's conclusion that "the history of spirit in the world, that is to say, loses its general and objective character and becomes a working within individuals".[25]

The comic element in the choric characters of Shakespeare not only indicates the Shakespearean exuberance and buoyancy but also points to a deeper truth that detachment, comic or otherwise, alone can help us transcend tragedy and this idea is fully developed in Prospero. It may also satisfy the impersonal nature of the world spirit--something parallel to the Hindu concept of the similarly detached Lord Krishna before the suffering humanity. From the aesthetic point of view all this results in the synthesis of our tragic emotions where tension and serenity are reconciled.

We have a similar but not identical technique in Ilango. Kannaki is often associated with the common folk. In the beginning she is seen in the midst of the worshipping women who praise her[26] when she enters a new phase of life; in the end she is praised by a vast international gathering when she enters another phase of life, but now in the heaven of heavens.[27] We also see her in association with the huntsmen, the shepherdesses and the mountain girls who represent the bed-rock of culture and preserve certain intuitive modes of perception and therefore get into rapport with Kannaki very easily and quickly. The idea seems to be that in the heroine we have the intensification of the spiritual powers in the common folk and this is a testimony to the instinctive faith of Ilango in a spiritual democracy and this is one of the factors contributing to the uniqueness of **Cilappatikāram** and here we can see the anticipation of Bharati's discovery of the divine in the common folk.[28]

Let us look at the philosophic significance as well as the aesthetic significance of the role of the three groups. They come in the three important phases of the evolution of Kannaki. They are closer to the Greek chorus than Shakespeare's choric characters in the sense that they are not individualised like Shakespeare's characters, nor is there any comic element associated with them. We shall look at their function one by one.

The huntsmen are the first to be associated with Kannaki

and they meet Kannaki in the company of Kovalan and Kavundi Adikal when they are taking rest in the shade provided by Aiyai temple. One cf them is possessed by god and she in her ecstasy perceives the divine in Kannaki and speaks of all her future as if it had already occurred.[29] One is tempted to compare this individual perception with Eliot's use of "I" in the chorus in the **Murder in the Cathedral** in certain rare moments of illumination.[30] And Sālini seems to transcend time in her ecstasy and divine intoxication. This probably signifies the truth that certain levels of our conciousness are not subject to time. It is interesting to note that not only Kannaki herself is unaware of her divinity, but her humanity exactly at that point is most touching. She is overcome with a sense of shame and humility and hastens to hide herself behind Kovalan. Here in Kannaki we have the juxtaposition cf the divine with the human. (We can take Kannaki standing behind Kovalan as a visual correlative to this) and possibly there is the further suggestion that the human is the divine. That hiding behind her husband could suggest her discovery of her identity through self - surrender and identification with her husband.

Then comes the choric dance of the group celebrating the triumph of the goddess Kotravai who has assisted them in their ferocious activities. Thev offer her blood as sacrifice and thereby they want her to sustain them. This could suggest the belief of the primitive people who associated blood with renewal of life and it can be related to the sacrifice of Kannaki which brings fertility to the land. Thereby Kannaki is associated with the Sakti or the primordial energy of the universe. In Kotravai we have the parallel to the fury of Kannaki that is going to follow very soon. It is also significant that Kotravai has absorbed the characteristics of both Shiva and Mayoon, the god of destruction as well as the god of protection, because she is the creative principle prior to both.

Aesthetically this could be taken as a perspective scene in the turning point of the epic and it not only enhances the status of Kannaki, but makes her evolution more dramatic and we experience it through the response of others. This would spiritualise our emotions when we see Kannaki's fury and this purification and distancing of the emotions is a major function of this device. Moreover, the choric dance aims at a catharsis for the group also. They are in a state of tension which is brought to normalcy by this group dancing. We are reminded of Aristotle's explanation of Catharsis; "Some people are liable to become possessed by the latter emotion, but we see that when they have made use of the

melodies which fill the soul with orgiastic feeling, they are brought back by these melodies to a normal condition as if they had been medically treated and undergone a catharsis".[31] And the readers by participating in this are supposed to undergo a similar catharsis. The creative dance of the cosmic power itself suggests a similar achievement of Apollonian serenity through Dionysian frenzy. **Cilappatikaram** thus gives an insight into the early phases of the evolution of tragedy and shows a close kinship with the early phases of the evolution of tragedy in Greece. Just as Greek tragedy emerged out of the choric dances, **Cilappatikāram** seems to have emerged out of similar choric dances and it retains those dances also which interpenetrate the literary part. As a matter of fact **Cilappatikāram** can be taken as a literary equivalent to a choric dance and the reader, while he imaginatively participates in this, finds his emotions magnified as well as purified, kindled as well as purged.

At the next stage we find Kannaki in the midst of **Āycciyar** or the shepherdesses who also represent the common folk and who enact a ritualistic dance when they dimly perceive the tragedy. Superficially the dance is performed to alleviate the suffering of the cows which seem to suffer in anticipation for Kannaki, and while they dance they themselves participate in the agony of the cosmos. They are both detached and involved and the unknown fear which impels them to act is itself purged by this process. It is a struggle towards serenity and they attain it through art which means detached involvement. Through miming they both suffer and attain serenity by invoking the harmony of Mayoon. Aristotelian concept of mimesis is beautifully illustrated here. Through miming they grasp at reality. This is parallel to the evolution of Kannaki herself. She too suffers for some one else--but this is in life and through detached involvement and identification with the creative centre she attains serenity. So the **'Āycciyar Kuravai'** looks back and forward, but in their consciousness there is no such distinction. They both know and do not know.

The theme of their song is the triumph of the loving anthropomorphic god Kannan whose music is symbolic of the divine harmony which transcends all our human catastrophe and evil.[32] Just as the huntsmen unconsciously identified Kannaki with Kotravai now the shepherdesses identify her (again not explicitly) with Mayoon. Even in Kannan the emphasis is on the synthesis of the cosmic with the human, similarly she is a human being evolving into the cosmic. She too will soon attain an equipoise through tension which is beyond suffering and tragedy--and this state is the one symbolised

by the music of Kannan.

The choric song served several purposes in the primitive society. They believed that the rhythmic enactment of their grief was a way of transcending it and that is why they are able to sublimate their agony into art. According to C.M.Bowra, "Primitive man is surrounded by forces which he cannot control or understand, and he hopes that by finding the right words he may gain some hold on them."[33] The shepherdesses seek to master their emotions through expression and to quote Bowra again, "Primitive song takes its singers out of themselves by making them act a part even if this is themselves as they have recently been or hope to be. It gives that distance from the immediate scene which is the foundation of all the arts".[34] And this distancing and mastery of emotions is experienced by the reader also. For him there is the double distancing, he sees the Kannaki situation through the artistic rendering of these people. And this almost liberates the scene from the context and transfers the action to universal plane where time is made to stand still, and coming immediately after the death of Kovalan, it alleviates the tension both in the scene and the reader's mind. It gives a mastery over the fact of death to the characters, and through them to us. The very opening of this section indicated the reassertion of the current of life,[35] but then there was the unknown fear, but at the end again by their very group dance(which also symbolises human solidarity before suffering) they enact the reassertion and perpetuation of the current of life in the face of death. We have a close parallel to this in the **Porter Scene** in **Macbeth** which too has a choric function and alleviates the tension in us as well as asserts the flow of life in spite of personal tragedy, however great it may be.

In **Kunrakkuravai** we see the final phase of Kannaki's evolution and she is now seen and worshipped by the Kuravas of the hills. They are closer to cosmic forces and they have an intimate sense of god and that is why they are also quick to identify Kannaki with Valli[36] and see her apotheosis. And they accept her as the goddess and this is followed by a choric dance, celebrating the power of Muruga. In **Vañcik Kāṇṭam** we have peripeteia in more than one sense -- a most miserable human being is converted into a great cosmic power; death is converted into a higher life and a source of life; terror is converted into charity and love. All the divided human beings are reconciled in a higher love and at the political level also, the divided parts are reconciled in the higher synthesis of Tamilnadu -- or even India. And it is this movement of synthesis and serenity that is inaugu-

rated by the choric dance praising the love ano power of Muruga. Lord Muruga is again an anthropomorphic god whose presence is intensely felt by these ordinary people. We have the juxtaposition of the divine and the human in Muruga himself; at another level we see this in the juxtaposition of Muruga and the ordinary people and also of Kannaki and the ordinary people. The theme of the whole work is Kannaki becoming divine through a struggle and that is parallel to the people finding the divine through a temporary strife extension. This evolution through suffering is fundamental in the tragic concept of Ilango.

Kunrakkuravai seems only to speak of Muruga's response to the human call. He is associated with fertility in the land and the heart of the people -- he simply assists people in their love and now indirectly Kannaki is associated with this cosmic principle of love and she is also supposed to bring fertility to the land. Just as Muruga symbolises a synthesis of power and love, Dionysian frenzy and Apollonian peace, in Kannaki also we find the subordination of fury to love and energy to peace.

This prayer in the form of an ecstatic dance is also a means of attaining equipoise and Lord Muruga is supposed to respond to the bacchic dance. This is parallel to the invitation of the chorus to Dionysus in **Antigone.** In "Form and Meaning" Kitto says that first "the chorus joyfully appeal to Dionysus that he will lead the dance, but the next time it appeals to Dionysus, in the sixth ode, it is that he will come and save them from the threatening pestilence".[37] Both Dionysus and Muruga stand for fertility and love, but there is greater spiritual sublimation in Muruga. The dance is supposed to bring them not only psychic peace, but also prosperity and this much faith is not there in the Greek chorus. Again, here there is not only catharsis of terror and pity, but a more sublime awe and love are experienced by the dancers. It could be taken as their feeling towards Kannaki as well as Muruga and that is also parallel to the reader's growing response. As a matter of fact there is more poise and fulfilment in all the three choruses than in the Greek choruses where we have more tension and agony, and in **Kunrakkuravai** we have only the sublimation of this process, and this again is a prelude to our emotional response for the final synthesis of **Vañcik Kāṇṭam.**

In **Vāñcik Kāṇṭam's** final peripeteia there is something like the concept of the Fortunes Fall brought out in **Paradise Lost** -- the downward movement itself becomes an upward movement, the helpless woman with all passion spent and

with only one breast passes through a stage beyond suffering and is elevated into a divine being. Here we have a close parallel to the fate of Oedipus at Colonus. If **Oedipus at Colonus** is concerned with the making of a hero, **Cilappati-kāram** is concerned with the making of a heroine who is also a divine being and her quiet disappearance on the hills and becoming a companion of gods can be compared to the passing of Oedipus:

> No fiery - flashing thunderbolt of God
> Encompassed his destruction, and no wind
> Come whirling from the Ocean in that hour,
> But either the gods took him, or the earth
> In good will opened up its lightless caves.[38]

In both we have the birth of poise through suffering, of power through helplessness, of love through terror, and of a cosmic or divine power through a helpless human being.

In both **Cilappatikāram** and **Oedipus at Colonus** we find also that death is being converted into a higher life and a source of life. Not only the living worship the dead, they lean upon the dead for sustenance and survival. The basic tragic factor seems to be the fact that all survival should presuppose death and sacrifice. Creation means agony and life presupposes death: "Not only Kannaki and Kovalan are reborn through love; we find Kannaki's living presence being honoured by King Chenguttuvan. We can also find a parallel between Chenguttuvan's desire to honour Kannaki for the sake of the welfare of his people with the desire of Theseus to preserve Oedipus's body as a source of the sustenance of his people.[39] One can find even a closer parallel in Chengu-ttuvan's description of the fickleness of the wheel of Fortune when he is thinking of the glorification of Kannaki with Oedipus's words to Theseus:

> Dear son of Aegeus, to the gods alone
> Belongs immunity from death and age;
> All else doth all controlling time confound .[40]

In the words of C.M. Bowra "here we have the suggestion that because there is a law of universal change, Thebes will turn from friendship with Athens to enmity, and then Oedipus' body will be of great use" and this is similar to Chenguttuvan's hope for victory in his great expedition to the North.[41] And what Bowra says further about **Oedipus at Colonus** is most illuminating from the point of view of **Cilappatikāram** also: "It is based on a kind of intimacy bet-ween the living and the dead, on the love which Oedipus

has for Athens, and on the honour in which Athens holds him. It is a real relation. Oedipus belongs to the company of the 'Stronger' who must be treated with respect and have nothing ill said of them. The dead not only give life, nourishment and increase, but if rightly entreated, they can send other and less tangible blessings. This power to send good or evil in return for care or neglect shows that heroes, like the other dead, stood in a special relation to their cities and families. If such honoured them they prospered. And in a deeper sense, the dead were believed to partake in the life of the living, the living to owe a peculiar regard to the dead. The two were closer than common language would suggest. When Heraclitus says, "Mortals are immortals and immortals are mortals, living the others' death and dying the others' life," he may have intended a special reference now lost, but he based himself on something familiar to the Greek consciousness. When Oedipus is below earth with the dead, he wil still live in the life of the living, while the living in their communion with him will partake of his state and of the power that comes from the dead".[42]

This resolution can be compared with Milton's in **Samson Agonistes,** where the dead hero is supposed to live beyond death and is compared to,

> . . . . that self-begotten bird
> In the Arabian woods embost,
> That no second knows nor third,
> And lay ere while, a Holocaust,
> From out her ashy womb now teem'd
> Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most
> When most unactive deem'd
> And though her body die, her fame survives
> A secular bird of ages lives.[43]

Both Samson and Kannaki live in memory; and this is immortality in humanistic terms. Of course in **Cilappatikāram** the triumph is more transcendental -- Kannaki is supposed not to die, but she becomes the companion of gods when she meets her husband also and again she appears before praying humanity and blesses them all.

But the similarities between the resolution of **Cilappatikāram** on the one hand and those of **Oedipus at Colonus** and **Samson Agonistes** are most revealing. All the three end up with a note of serenity and synthesis, and all the three have a suggestion of life beyond death and we have "a calm of mind, with all passion spent"[44] in all the three characters concerned, Kannaki, Oedipus and Samson. Wood-

house has said that there is more of triumph than relief at the end of **Samson Agonistes** and here we can see a modified conception of catharsis[45] and it is this which is indicated and inaugurated in the choric song of the hill-men.

To this we can add the triumph of the people concerned in all the three. In **Cilappatikāram** we have the **resurrection** of the entire land through her sacrifice; it looks as though the society has been evolving its own principle of salvation through her. Not only does King Chenguttuvan win a great victory; it culminates in a synthesis of parts; the divided parts of the Chera, Chola and Pandiya kingdoms are reconciled in the higher synthesis of Tamilnadu. This dream is implicit in the overall structure of **Cilappatikāram** and made explicit in the **Nūrkaṭṭurai**[46] and we have also the dim suggestion of the emerging of one India, or even a larger brotherhood than that. As we have already argued, this is only a magnified version of the union at the deeper level; in the final vision of Kannaki all the differences are subsumed. We can also find in Kannaki herself another synthesis -- the synthesis of Kotravai, Mayoon and Muruga. She is being worshipped by all at the end; she is the underlying harmony not only between the parts of Tamilnadu, but all the three gods and finally she emerges as a national goddess absorbing the three regional deities.[47]

Scholars like T.R. Henn and E.M.W. Tillyard are of the view that this regeneration movement is essential in a tragedy.[48] According to T.R. Henn only this would satisfy our life instincts and tragedy attains an equilibrium of both the life instincts and death impulses. It is not a sense of triumph, pure and simple, but the sense of triumph is there as a component of a larger complex emotion: "The dead is removed beyond judgement, or at least distanced until the new order has had time to root itself, and the hero's deeds have become part of the historical cycle".[49] And what he says about the Phoenix passage can be applied to the Kannaki situation also: "The long decorative excursion on the Phoenix, from one point of view cumbrous and artificial, is designed to provide just this slowing down expansion and realignment of Samson's death into a mythology of its own". And then he adds that "The epic element, the pride of achieved revenge, and the ceremonial of the obsequies, combine to distance Samson's death and to place it in a peculiarly **exalted and familiar** setting. Is it possible that one element of the death-resolution demands for our satisfaction this defiance of the gods, this alignment and unification with history, a kind of epic challenge?"[50]

Louis Martz in his brilliant essay, **The Saint as a Tragic Hero** has postulated for tragedy a scale or spectrum ranging between the two poles of doubt and affirmation or to put it more precisely, between the pole of fruitless suffering and the pole of universal cause. "Not a scale of value, but a spectrum of various qualities, with **A Farewell to Arms** marking one extreme, outside the area of tragedy, and Shakespeare's **Tempest**, perhaps marking the other. In between, within the area of tragedy would lie an enormous variety of works that would defy any rigorous attempt at definition except that all would show in some degree a mingled atmosphere of doubt and affirmation, of human suffering and secret cause.

Far over toward the side of fruitless suffering we might find the plays of Ibsen or **Othello.** Somewhere in the middle **Hamlet**, or **Oedipus Rex** and far over toward the other side we might find a triad of strongly affirmative tragedies; **Oedipus at Colonus, Samson Agonistes** and **Murder in the Cathedral;** and still farther over, perhaps hanging on by his hands to the very rim of tragedy, we might even find a place for Bernard Shaw".[51] And this concept he is developing from James Joyce who has defined catharsis through Stephen Dedalus: "Aristotle has not defined pity and terror, I have pity is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatsoever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with the secret cause".[52] Or in Martz's language, "Tragedy, then, seems to demand both the human sufferer and the secret cause: that is to say the doubt, the pain, the pity of the human sufferer and the affirmation, the awe, the terror of the secret cause".[53]

In I.A.Richards and Miss Bodkin this idea is put in psychological terms. To quote Miss Bodkin: "The experience of tragic drama both gives in the figure of the hero an objective form to the self of imaginative aspiration, or to power-craving and also, through the hero's death, satisfies the counter-movement of feeling toward the surrender of personal claims and the merging of the ego within a greater power--the community consciousness.

"Thus the archetypal pattern corresponding to tragedy may be said to be a certain organisation of the tendencies of assertion and self-submission. The self which is asserted is magnified by that same collective force to which finally submission is made and from the tension of the two impulses and their reaction upon each other, under the conditions of poetic exaltation, the distinctive tragic attitude and emotion appears to arise".[54]

According to all these critics, terror is associated with the cosmic power which crushes the hero and pity with the human sufferer, but in a genuine tragic response there is an equilibrium of both the impulses. That is why Richards says that any compensatory heaven is fatal to tragedy.[55] According to this view the catharsis of **King Lear** would be closer to the Aristotelian norm than that of **Antony and Cleopatra** or **Cilappatikāram.** They would agree with Jan Kott according to whom in **King Lear** "there is neither Christian Heaven nor the heaven predicted and believed in by humanists. **King Lear** makes a tragic mockery of all eschatologies; of the heaven promised on earth, and the heaven promised after death; infact, of both Christian and secular theodicies, of cosmogony and the rational view of history; of the gods and the good nature, of man made in image and likeness. In **King Lear** both the medieval and the Renaissance orders of established values disintegrate. All that remains at the end of this gigantic pantomime is the earth -- empty and bleeding".[56] But this seems to be too pessimistic. Critics from Dr.Johnson onwards have denied pure tragic ethos to **King Lear** on this ground[57] and some like Stampfer try to solve it by saying that **King Lear** deliberately aims at the purging of a deeper fear that the partner of covenant may be malign.[58] The Age of Reason tried to mend matters by providing Lear and Cordelia with crumbs of earthly comfort and the fact that Nahum Tate's version continued to be acted for such a long time shows not only the change in the sensibility of the people, but it represents the craving of an important and eternal part of humanity for shallow justice. This is part of the process of myth-making, but again it has not stood the test of time, whereas in **Cilappatikāram** we can postulate a similar evolution of myth in the deification of Kannaki, but that has been absorbed by the original myth. This would bring out an important difference in the concept of tragedy in Shakespeare and Ilango. In the Tamil tradition the suggestion of immortality is more explicit and in the Western tradition, on the other hand, it is only implied. Bradley accounts for the 'reconciliation' brought out by Cordelia's death by the impression that it also simultaneously creates an impression that death does not affect her also.[59] We get the feeling that Lear is rather set free from life than deprived of it, and we are also tempted to believe that "the tragic world, if taken as it is presented, with all its error, guilt, failure, woe and waste is no final reality, but only a part of reality taken for the whole, and when so taken, illusive; and that if we could see the whole and the tragic facts in their true place in it, we should find them, not abolished, of course, but so transmuted that they

had ceased to be strictly tragic-find, perhaps, the suffering and death counting for little or nothing, the greatness of the soul for much or all, and the heroic spirit, in spite of failure, nearer to the heart of things than the smaller, more circumspect and perhaps even 'better' beings who survived the catastrophe".[60] The sense of liberation and triumph is probably an exaggeration and Bradley himself supplements it with a footnote and says that "if this idea were made explicit and accompanied our reading of a tragedy throughout it would confuse or even destroy the tragic impression".[61] And he adds that "the reader most attached to these (Christian) beliefs holds them in temporary suspension while he is immersed in a Shakespearean tragedy. Such tragedy assumes that the world as it is presented, is the truth, though it also provokes the feelings which imply that this world is not the whole truth, and therefore not the truth".[62]

That there is something of a double consciousness in a tragedy has been accepted by Dorothea Krook and other important theorists of tragedy the sense of irreparable loss is an important component and when we have a Prospero-like transcendence of suffering, there can be no tragedy. In **Cilappatikāram** and **King Lear,** suffering is real and the loss is irreparable. Lear learns through suffering and attains a state in which suffering is inseparable from joy--but the law also is there. In **Cilappatikāram** also Kannaki acquires spiritual power through suffering and she passes to a serenity beyond suffering, but here also the law remains unalterable and Kannaki continues to be human even at the moment of apotheosis. Eliot makes a distinction between religious vision and tragic clairvoyance when he says that Shakespearean vision is short of only religious in **King Lear,** but Danby refutes this by saying: "I do not myself think that there is a necessary contradiction between tragic vision and religious vision though some tragedies can be religious and some religions can be non-tragic".[63] Goldmann also says: "For those reasons the tragic vision is a return, after the amoral and a-religious period of empiricism and rationalism to ethics and **religion,** taking the last word in its widest sense of **faith** in a body of values **which transcend the individual.**[64] Probably what Eliot means is that the tragic vision does not have the mystic transcendence of the world and the body -- because the death of Romeo and Juliet embracing each other so warmly is the tragedian's answer to death and not the mystic's, because here is only a **suggestion** of triumph over death and not a negation of the reality of death. It is too human a vision to be mystic and the fact that they have to die together in order to discover and demonstrate a deeper synthesis is tragic. When we compare this

with the end of **Antony and Cleopatra,** we can see both a continuity and development in Shakespearean vision. Throughout, Shakespeare is emphasising only the reality of human love and passion and its capacity to defeat death. In man and the cosmos we have both the dimensions--law and love and in Hegelian terms this division is essential for evolution and in Shakespeare and Ilango there is a greater emphasis on love than law and in that sense they both are different from the Greek tragedians. But the generalisation is dangerous because in Aeschylus also the law melts into love and Sophocles's **Oedipus at Colonus** also suggests that, but there is difference in emphasis. In Kamban we have a similar dichotomy between Dharma and Fate, and when Rama goes to the forest, Fate seems to overtake the other, but even then Fate is only an instrument of Dharma.[65] Ultimately it is only Love that works through Law. As we have already argued this can be compaed to the Wordsworthian insight in **The Prelude** when he discovers love as the ultimate principle and even terror is subsumed in it.[66]

But in Shakespeare and Ilango there is a greater emphasis upon human love. In **Cilappatikāram** too we find love subsuming terror both in Kannaki and the gods. All the three gods are only loving gods -- even Kotravai's fury is only a manifestation of love and possibly Muruga marks the final evolution in the society's search for a humane god of love and mercy.

Coming back to Bradley on the reconciliation in **King Lear** we can agree that there is that element, but it may not be due to a perception of the unreality of this life, but because of the reality of human passion and love. Lear's reconciliation with Cordelia and the cosmos is achieved through a sense of alienation and that sense of alienation is there till the end along with the other. Lear discovers a deeper kinship with Cordelia and the cosmos through death. We can also note that mature Indian readers have never been depressed by **King Lear.** It may be mainly because the Indians could perceive that deeper harmony in that chaos quickly. Arnold Toynbee's reference to the radical pessimism of India also suggests only this. Bradley sees evolution in all the sufferers,[67] but the sense of evolution is not as clear in it as in **Cilappatikāram.** In **Cilappatikāram** all but the goldsmith suffer and there is growth in them too. That is why **Cilappatikāram** seems to be closer to the Hegelian concept of tragedy. In **Cilappatikāram** the synthesis is complete and there is a greater sense of triumph and in that sense it is nearer to the spirit of **Antony and Cleopatra.** And it is interesting to note that Bradley does not include **Antony and Cleopatra** in his list of pure tragedies and even in his

essay on **Antony and Cleopatra** he refers to this positive element in it. There is no mystery in the solution of **Antony and Cleopatra.** They accept death with joy, and humanity is seen to be "rising by its greatness into ideal union with the power that overwhelms it".[68] Whereas in **King Lear** there is something of the salvage of the wreck of an earthly paradise when Lear says, "Come, let's away to prison. We two alone will sing like birds i'the cage;"[69] in **Antony and Cleopatra** the lovers are determined to meet in a new heaven and a new earth.[70] Here again Shakespeare makes a subtle distinction between Antony and Cleopatra. Antony has a vision of future -- he uses "will", but Cleopatra sees it as present and says: "Husband I come!"[71] and her plan to go to the Cydnus -- again is only a return to the human reality and she is possibiy thinking not of a new heaven, but a new earth transformed by love. But the most important thing is that in Cleopatra there is greater faith and the question is in this leap unto faith, is not tragedy completely nullified? Throughout his career Shakespeare has been showing the power of woman's faith to avert tragedy along with the stupidity of fools. Both self surrender and stupidity are only two manifestations of detachment and in **The Tempest** we find all these converging; love in Miranda, contemplation and detachment in Prospero and stupidity of Trinculo make sin and suffering unreal and that is why it is not a tragedy. But is that true of **Antony and Cleopatra** and **Cilappatikāram**? In both we have an approach to that stage but both are still within the spectrum of tragic experience because sin and suffering are not negated here. Eventhough Kannaki's identification with the cosmos is greater than the protagonists of **Antony and Cleopatra, Cilappatikāram** is probably more tragic than **Antony and Cleopatra** because Kannaki also remains fully human till the end and interestingly enough Ilango does not make Kannaki know her being an instrument until the action is over; and even then all that develops later is not anticipated. Her early sufferings are so real that they are not cancelled out in the final victory, whereas in **Antony and Cleopatra** the sense of suffering is not so intense even earlier. And that is why the comedy of its earlier part can be reconciled with the final sense of joy, whereas in **Cilappatikāram** there is no joy, but a serenity at the end and this can be reconciled with the intense suffering of the earlier part. Just as Lear's final ecstasy is inseparable from his agony, Kannaki's final serenity is inseparable from her sublime sorrow and Cleopatra's triumphant march into a new heaven and earth can also be reconciled with her earlier comic games. It is possible to see a closer similarity between **The Tempest** and **Shākuntalam** on the one hand[72] and **Antony and Cleopatra** and **Cilappatikāram,** on the other.

The second pair are within the tragic because of their emphasis on the reality of suffering. But Shakespeare is closer to Kalidasa in his final mood and so one can say that the mature Shakespeare is contemporaneous with Ilango and Kalidasa -- among others. But one should be aware of the differences too. If we say that **Cilappatikāram** is tragic it is not exactly in the sense in which **King Lear** or even **Antony and Cleopatra** is. We must be ready to see more synthesis and sense of evolution into the divine here as part of the Indian tradition and the difference is only minimal. If the Western view -- at least Shakespeare's -- can be summed up in Wordsworth's words: "Suffering is permanent obscure and dark and shares the nature of infinity",[73] Ilango's view is not very different but here suffering brings man closer to infinity.

If there is a greater synthesis in the tragic universe of Ilango, it also results in a greater synthesis of emotions in the tragic response. If the emphasis in Ilango is on synthesis, in Shakespeare it is on tension. But tension in art suggests synthesis, and there can also be no synthesis without tension. Even the Aristotelian catharsis only leads to an equilibrium, but explicitly it refers only to purgation. All art aims at only a **santhi**, a peace that passeth all understanding; and in the catharsis of Shakespearean tragedies and **Cilappatikāram** we see only slightly different approximations towards that. If the Eastern art sees the circumference from the still centre, and in the West the centre is seen from the circumference, the dichotomy can always be resolved in rapid motion and then we have neither the centre nor the circumference, but both. In Nietzsche's theory of reconciliation of the Dionysian and Apollonian in tragedy, this coexistence of suffering with joy, of primordial energy and form, of tension and serenity is implied".[74]

But Schopenhauer seems to be nearer to Eastern concept in general, that of Ilango in particular. He interprets catharsis as a complete enfranchisement from passions, something akin to Milton's "Calm of mind, all passion spent".[75] Both Nietzsche and Schopenhauer seem to feel that there is both arousing and mitigation of passions, eventhough Nietzsche gives more emphasis to the former and Schopenhauer to the latter, but, according to E.F.Carritt, both seem to feel that by putting him (a reader) into a spiritual instead of a brutal relation with his feelings, it delivers him from their tyranny.[76] This is true of all art, and tragic purgation differs from others only in degree. Stevenson brings it out clearly: "To sit still and contemplate, to remember the faces of women without desire, to be pleased by the great deeds

of men without envy, to be everything and everywhere in sympathy and yet content to remain where and what you are -- is not this to know both wisdom and virtue, and to dwell with happiness?"[77] And this detached involvement is the essence of aesthetic experience and this should result in emotional equilibrium or serenity.

James Joyce's interpretation of catharsis is very illuminating. He refers to a state, a stasis which is beyond loathing and desire: "The tragic emotion, in fact, is a face looking two ways, towards terror and towards pity, both of which are phases of it. You see I used the word **arrest.** I mean the tragic emotion is **static.** Or rather the dramatic emotion is. The feelings excited by improper art are kinetic, desire or loathing. Desire urges us to possess, to go to something, loathing urges us to abandon, to go from something. The arts which excite them, pornographical or didactic, are therefore improper arts. The aesthetic emotion (I used the general term) is therefore static. The mind is arrested and raised above desire and loathing".[78] This comes close to the Eastern concept of Rasa. Commenting on the poetics of Abhinavagupta Dr.Gnoli says: "Pain, which is mobility, inquietitude, has no place in aesthetic experience, which is rest, lysis and the fulfilment of all desires -- unless it is converted magically into pleasure".[79] According to P. Lal, to postulate a ninth Sthayi Bhava, that of santa or serenity is due to a misunderstanding of Bharata: "While each of these eight emotions might be described loosely as having their own rasa, rasa itself is unique, total and single. It is indescribable and supernatural. Bharata suggests that the ninth rasa, that of santa, is in fact the only real rasa, the others being steps to it or ingredients in it. The total is more than the sum of its parts, and different from them".[80]

It is true that the interpretation of catharsis by Joyce and Schopenhauer is very close to some of the interpretations of the Santhi, but there seems to be a difference in the sense that in the Western theories the emphasis is on the tension preceding serenity, the motion suggesting stasis, whereas the Eastern concept gives importance to the stasis absorbing motion or the serenity transcending tension. And this can be illustrated with reference to the response to **King Lear** and **Cilappatikāram.** It is true that there is what I.A. Richards calls the systematisation or the co-ordination of discordant impulses in both and the sensitive reader ultimately experiences only that rasa underlying all emotions in both. Even what is described as the unity of theme or mood in Western aesthetics is suggested in the concepts of Aucitya and Rasa in Sanskrit. The comic exuberance of

the early parts of **Antony and Cleopatra** can easily be reconciled with the tragic triumph of the later part and it is this emotional unity that is the life-germ of the whole play. But does this reconciliation of impulses (which can be derived partly from Coleridge's reconciliation of opposites) result in the same compound both in **Cilappatikāram** and **King Lear**? In a sense every work of art is unique and the impact of **King Lear** is not that of **Hamlet** or **Othello** and that is why Kenneth Muir says that we cannot think of Shakespearean tragedy, but only Shakespearean tragedies.[81] But in so far as generalisation is possible, we can say that there is something common in the emotional response to Shakespearean tragedies -- and is it comparable to our emotional response to **Cilappatikāram**?

Ka.Naa.Subramanyam has applied the concept of Rasa to the study of **Cilappatikāram** and says: "**Sānthi** is as much a **rasa** as any of the other -- perhaps more difficult of achievement than others. There will always be writers who strive to bring a tear of joy or sorrow to the eye of their readers but even they can, I hope, theoretically concede that **Sānthi** might be worth attempting. A critical acceptance of **Sānthi** as the final **rasa**, the **rasa of rasas**, seems to be present ever to the mind of the poet of the **Cilappatikāram** and his critical selectiveness of material and his artifice of over and understatements at critical points in the story would indicate that here was one poet who knew what he was doing and went about it in the manner that was available to him, ignoring contemporary conventions".[82] One can agree with the view that Ilango aims at Shanthi, but Mr. Subramanyam does not stop there. He has also said that, "the marvellous precision with which the most conscious of poets in Tamil sets out to 'kill' all emotion, to attain an 'objectivity' that is rare enough in world literature, has to be critically examined to be understood".[83] First of all there seems to be a confusion between emotional stasis and critical objectivity. But more serious than that is to say that Ilango sets out to kill all emotion and then it is said that Ilango was capable of "moving lyrics of great intensity of feeling -- it would seem to me that the poet includes these lyrics just to indicate that he could do the moving lyrics that were currently becoming the fashion in the **Bhakti** age but that he preferred to do the 'emotionally static' type of poetry for the major part of his epic".[84] This makes Ilango a chaotic artist which he is not. The stasis of **Cilappatikāram** does not suggest absence of emotions. In **Cilappatikāram** there is no violent exhibition of emotions, but only an artistic rendering of them. There is powerful emotion recreated in tranquility. Coleridge refers to the kindling and at the

same time ordering of emotions by metre in poetry. Because Ilango is said to be a Jain it is easy to say that there is a suppression of emotions, but our emotional response tells a different tale. It may be correct to say that **Cilappatikāram** marks a transition towards the Bhakti age both in spirit and technique -- from the pantheistic vision of the Sangam poetry we pass on to more personal gods; from the emotional stasis of the Sangam lyrics, we pass on to the greater intensity of the lyric of the Bhakti age. This can be related to Dr. T.P.Meenakshisundaranar's thesis that in **Cilappatikāram** we have an extension of the dramatic monologues of the Sangam age. It may be argued that **Cilappatikāram** marks an era of emotional suppression and Bhakti cult shows the release of the pent-up emotions but a more acceptable interpretation would be to say that **Cilappatikāram** marks an evolution in so far as there is more of the Dionysian in it, and the Apolleonian element of the Sangam poetry coexists with the Dionysian element. This is parallel to Nietzsche's account of the Greek tragedy, who says that the Athenian tragedy marks a synthesis of the Apollonian and the Dionysian but there the Dionysian is more dominating.[85] But in Tamil tradition, we have an epic as the culmination and this pattern is repeated in **Kambarāmāyaṇam** which comes after the ecstasy of the Bhakti songs. In the Sangam lyrics we have epic stasis and dramatic potential and in **Cilappatikāram** we have an exploitation of the dramatic potential, but the epic pull is also equally strong, and if there is a final victory it is for the epic. This can be related to the sculpturesque element in Indian art in general and this search for stasis can partially account for the relative absence of drama also in Indian tradition in general, and in Tamil in particular.

This equilibrium in the emotional impact or Rasa is also reflected in the structure of the epic which is characterised by symmetry through-out. The three Kantams end with the **Kaṭṭurais** which are similar and yet not the same and the **Nūrkaṭṭurai** binds them together and refers to the concept of oneness of Tamilnadu. Kannaki emerges as a symbol of this deeper unit that binds together not only the three parts of Tamilnadu but also the entire humanity. This is only one of the instances of Ilango's ability for synthesis of apparently diverse things. The **Mankaḷa Vāḻttuk Kātai** and the **Varantaru Kātai** are in symmetrical relationship to each other. We have already referred to the symmetry in **Kānal Vari.** We can also notice the symmetrical relationship between **Antimālaic Cirappuc Cey Kātai** and the **Vēnir Kātai** and the symmetry within the former itself -- when he deals with Madhavi and Kannaki. In all these cases the formal similarity

underlies a deeper unity. It is the similarity among the characters that is emphasised, and not the differences and eventhough Kannaki suffers because of Madhavi, and Kopperundevi suffers because of Kannaki, it is not seen so much as conflict between themselves. They seem to discover a deeper identity through suffering and in the real sense they are not fighting. Even in **Vaḻakkurai Kātai** which is the most dramatic section of the work with a quick exchange of dialogue, we are aware of the fact that the real issue is not between Kannaki and Nedunchezhiyan but between both of them and something else.

Finally, it is interesting to note that this emotional stasis (not 'killing of emotions') is the characterstic of Sanskrit drama as well as Japanese Noh. To quote Prof. Kantak, "Indeed, Asiatic drama has thus subtlised action with a poetic apprehension, you might almost say, to the point of spiriting it away. In the Japanese Noh, for instance, action is so purged of its physical accoutrements that it assumes the nature of a stance-action happening out of time, in the stillness of the soul. What the Noh presents is the flower, the **Yugen,** the final bloom of the tree of action not the bole, the roots and the worms. Though the Noh might derive othis idea specifically from Zen Buddhism, the Noh idea of action and the Indian have, at bottom, an obvious blood relationship. The distinctnesses are merely family differences".[86] In the action of **Cilappatikāram** we have the overall effect of stillness in motion. In structure a dome-like harmony is built out of the parts, and these are parallel to the concept of rasa, the artistic rendering of a pure (not ethically) emotion purged of existential dross. This stillness in motion which is the quintessence of Indian art is also illustrated in Lord Nataraja. In Shakespeare we have an approach towards this stillness even in **King Lear** and **Antony and Cleopatra**, but he is closer to it only in the **The Tempest** and **The Winter's Tale.** It is interesting to see that these plays have also a thematic affinity with Eastern dramas like **Sākuntalam.** Finally, we can note that the evolution of **Cilappatikāram** as a tragic epic has been necessitated by the tendencies which had taken root in the culture and tradition which it had inherited.

CHAPTER VII

SYNTHESIS: TOWARDS UNIVERSALS AND ROOTS

Joseph K. Yamagiwa, an optimistic comparatist, has said that "rich rewards may come from a comparison of the West, whose ways of thought and expression have largely developed out of the Hebraic-Christian and Graeco-Roman traditions, and the East, which is shaped mostly by ways of thought that are Hindic-Buddhist or Confucian-Taoist in origin".[1] We undertook a comparative study of Shakespeare and Ilango because they represent a culmination as well as great moments of synthesis in their respective cultures and though they are historically unrelated in the sense that there were no actual links, there are affinities between them, an exploration of which has resulted in mutual illumination.

A study of this kind has been supported by many comparatists, particularly of the American school. As Owen Alridge puts it, "the method of rapprochement, which resembles comparative law in pointing to analogies without contact"[2] permits a concentration on major works, offers an opportunity for aesthetic analysis, and may provide an insight into the process of artistic creation. This is made explicit in Remak's concept of comparative literature "less as an independent subject which must at all costs set up its own inflexible laws, than as a badly needed auxiliary discipline, a link between smaller segments of parochial literature, a bridge between organically related but physically separated areas of human creativeness" and he also insists that a systematic revitalising of the "comparative" (method) might be the

most natural and effective way of bringing literary criticism and evaluation into comparative literature through the comparison, by analogy or contrast, of (not necessarily casually) related works, works comparable because of elective affinities in theme, problem, genre, style, simultaneousness, zeitgeist, stage of cultural evolution, etc".[3]

The grounds of comparison in our study include almost all these, except simultaneousness and stage of cultural evolution. But even in this aspect we may see a similarity not only because Shakespeare and Ilango represented a culmination and a moment of confluence in their respective cultures but also because they both represent a similar stage in the evolution of their respective cultures: both were the products of a period of expansion and affirmation coming to grips with some sort of negation and sadness. This is also a sign of cultural maturity because we begin to see life fully only when we see life as a tragedy.

As tragedians, Shakespeare and Ilango show certain common concerns and, to some extent, some common answers. According to T.R.Henn, "The central problem of Tragedy, from Aeschylus onwards, has always been the moral or religious problem of evil and suffering in the world".[4] We have seen that both Shakespeare and Ilango relate suffering to human guilt--eventhough there is no direct proportion between suffering and guilt in either, and in both one does not suffer for one's sin alone. There is something of the scapegoat in Hamlet, Lear, Macbeth and Kannaki and possibly more of it in Kannaki, and correspondingly she is also more sublimated. If the world order needs Kannaki for the salvation of Kovalan, purgation of the Pandiya Kingdom and the rebirth of Tamilnadu, it also sublimates her through that process and in Bradley's terms we may say that the world order is seeking its own fulfilment through self-destruction.[5] We can find a parallel in Nammalvar who has also referred to the god that suffers.[6] In both the tragedians suffering and sacrifice are meaningful parts of an evolutionary universe. Both agree with the great truth embodied in the Bible:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit".[7] The sacrificing blood is essential for the sustaining of life and there seems to be a mysterious alliance between life and death.

But there is also a difference between the Western tragedian and the Eastern poet in this respect, because the former emphasises the human responsibility and guilt, whereas

the latter emphasises the working of an inexorable law through human actions even if it is for their own salvation. The notion of sin underlying the Shakespearean concept, and that of Karma underlying the tragic universe of Ilango are different upto a point. The Western view sees sin as inherent in all human actions and achievements. To quote Neibuhr,

> "Man is mortal. That is his fate. Man pretends not to be mortal. That is his sin . . . . The higher the tower is built to escape unnecessary limitations of the human imagination, the more certain it will be to defy necessary and inevitable limitations. Thus sin corrupts the highest as well as the lowest achievements of human life. . . . . This pride is at least one aspect of what Christian orthodoxy means by 'original sin'; It is not so much an inherited corruption as an inevitable taint upon the spirituality of a finite creature, always enslaved to time and place, never completely enslaved and always under the illusion that the measure of his emancipation is greater than it really is".[8]

And if we juxtapose this with Nietzsche's exposition of what he calls the Aryan view, we can perceive what is common in the Western concept in general. "What distinguishes the Aryan conception (from the Semitic myth of the Fall) is an exalted notion of active sin as the properly Promethean virtue; this notion provides us with the ethical substratum of pessimistic tragedy, which comes to be seen as a justification of human ills, that is to say of human ills as well as the suffering purchased by that guilt".[9] Of course, he distinguishes the **active** sin of Prometheus from the feminine sin of the Fall, but what is common to both is a sense of sin. The difference between the Greek view and the Christian view is also significant and in Shakespeare we see the shift from one to the other and that brings him closer to Ilango. However, in Shakespeare the emphasis is on the guilt of the human sinner. In Ilango the emphasis is on the law that works through humanity. In Shakespeare too there is a transcendental moral order, but the focus of attention is on the human sinner.

We have also seen that if from one point of view there is more of the Greek sense of fate in Ilango, there is also more evolution in Ilango. It is true that Ilango's characters are less **conscious** of guilt and the actions seem to spring from the bedrock of personality, and it looks as though they are only vessels for the fulfilling of their own Karma in their own way and it certainly allows them freedom to shape their own Karma which is also their character. Bharati also

seems to have felt that Karma is not imposed on us, but only fulfilled by us and that is why he said: "We will do Karmas more and more".[10]

What is most interesting is that in both Shakespeare and Ilango a cyclical view of life is being evolved into a progressive view. We find in Kannaki this grand synthesis -- the universal appetite or destiny resolves into her personal character. In Kannaki we find the paradox of the human situation as seen by the Indian mind illustrated most beautifully. If in one sense we find in her destiny the ripening of others' Karma, she also represents the movement of the history or shall we say the will of the world spirit and the more she identifies herself with it, the more she becomes powerful. This is something akin to the **Murder in the Cathedral** pattern, in which we see the working of Providence and the chorus are also unconsciously fulfilling only that and to that extent they also feel that they are forced to witness.[11] They seem to resist the universal force which works through them too. The same principle works through Becket also but he soon identifies himself with the divine will and that is why he too becomes the centre. Superficially he seems to suffer, but he is the real actor and at a deeper level God, the unmoved mover is the real actor whereas all the characters including Becket only suffer and where there is total identification there is neither action nor suffering.[12] In Kannaki's case we find a similar paradoxical development. The most important thing is that Karma or **ul** allows her to evolve, and she evolves into a cosmic force, something akin to that Karma itself. It looks as though that universal force out of love uses her because in her the appetite is greatest and it uses her only to evolve her.

In **King Lear** also we saw a similar, but not identical, personal development of character. In Lear also superficially there is a sense of being forced and used by an external force, but all the time he is free to evolve his character and he too **does evolve.** In this sense to both Shakespeare and Ilango, life is a vale of soul-making here and now. But if Lear is more free in one sense, he does not evolve to the extent to which Kannaki does. If the crucial peripeteia in Shakespeare gives the hero an insight into his guilt, in Ilango, Kannaki also through the oracle gets an insight into Kovalan's guilt as well as her sin of pride but that results in a reversal both in her character and fortunes. And the guilty Shakespearean hero also is given freedom to change his course and character, eventhough in the case of Macbeth there is an exception which only confirms the rule because he only does not **utilise** that freedom. The growing sense

of fate in **Macbeth** is onlv in proportion to his degeneration and at every stage he chooses not to choose. In fact in **Macbeth** we find the complete resolution of character-destiny dichotomy: crime begets crime, but it is the character's voluntary deed. The tryst with destiny seems to involve him in a sort of hide and seek. The different stages in Macbeth's meeting the witches show how his character is being shaped in relation to his own deeds and we car see an illuminating parallel between Macbeth's growing sense of fate and the increase in Ilängo's reference to earlier life in the later part of **Cilappatikāram.** Again, just as the predetermined pattern never affects the story--the characters are free to grow in both. As the witches' prophecy is clarified and fulfilled only gradually in Macbeth, we find the dream about Kovalan's doom is also completed by different characters. We must notice the difference in the fulfilment of an oracle prophecy in Macbeth and Kovalan. Just as in **Macbeth** the prophecies precede Macbeth's action but they are only gradually confirmed, in **Cilappatikāram** also, the dreams unfold the tragic doom gradually, but they never influence the action of the characters.

But if it is true that there is moral responsibility in both, there is less consciousness of sin in Ilango and character does not seem to be so fully affected or corrupted by one's deeds in **Cilappatikāram.** In this sense Ilango shows an affinity with the Buddhist view--because the characters do not seem to be in conflict with one another as their individual Karmas. But at a deeper level these distinctions dissolve pointing out to one principle which works through all, and we can postulate a collective Karma which presupposes the unity of all life. If in Shakespeare, a sense of collective guilt leads to the discovery of identity with all life and detachment, humility and love, in Ilango, the consciousness of a common Fate leads to the birth of detachment, humility and charity.

But there seems to be a slight difference in their emphasis. In Hamlet, the answer seems to be detachment. Hamlet's main problem is disengagement--he is trying to be in the world but not of the world and as we have argued in Chapter III the stage and the soldier images dramatise this meaning. He seems to enact the truth that once the soul realised that it is but an onlooker and not an actor in the tragedy of existence, release of true self from the empirical self and its entanglements Prakriti) is possible[13] We are all 'actors' on the stage of life; only when we realise it, we become real actors. Hamlet is groping for a sense of the real self through role-playing and like Kannaki there is full

self-realisation which is also transcendence, only when he identifies himself with the 'still centre'. One's real identity is inseperable from a sense of nothingness -- a sense of kinship with the centre, and a sense of kinship with all life. In **King Lear** it is the sense of kinship with all life that is emphasised whereas in **Hamlet** it is the sense of kinship with the creative centre that is emphasised, eventhough it also leads to love. In **King Lear** when there is the stripping of the superficial layers of personality, that is also an expansion, and in that deeper level there is not only a sense of universal guilt, but also a sense of universal brotherhood. And here again there is detachment, but it is the human solidarity and love that are emphasised. If on the other hand in **Cilappatikāram** also love is emphasised, it is derived from a recognition of oneness with an universal power. In both, the need for forgiveness and humility is there. "The only wisdom we can hope to acquire is the wisdom of humility: humility is endless".[14] But the Shakespearean emphasis shifts from detachment to love and this seems to be a typical Western trait. Whitman also recognises the oneness of humanity through a sense of guilt and the expansion into a cosmic consciousness is primarily an identification with all life.[15] Dostoevski also has a similar insight. At Ilusha's burial, Kolya says to Alyosha "It is all so strange, Karamazov, such a sorrow and the pan-cakes after it, it all seems to be so unnatural in our religion". But after Alyosha's beautiful pastoral charge to the children, he concludes: "Well, now we will finish talking and go to the funeral dinner. Don't put out at our eating pancakes -- it is a very old custom and there is something nice in that . . . . Well, let us go! And now we go hand in hand".[16] Commenting on this Richard B. Sewall says that "here is fatherhood lovingly extended and willingly accepted and a brotherhood gladly joined."[17] In Shakespeare, atleast in **King Lear,** what is emphasised is the brotherhood of man eventhough it presupposes the fatherhood of God. In the Eastern tradition it is the other way about. But the difference is only a question of emphasis.

This emphasis on love and mercy in both is reflected in their emphasis on the women's spiritual power. Cleopatra and Madhavi stand for energy and love and Cordelia and Kannaki for mercy and love which are more sublime and spiritual. But there are differences. If both Cleopatra and Madhavi evolve, Madhavi chooses the road of humility and detachment whereas Cleopatra even in her upward movement is of the earth till the end. Kannaki is more active and assertive than Cordelia and Kovalan's salvation is subordinated to the sublimation of Kannaki, whereas in Shakespeare it is the human sinner who is the focus of attention. There

is also more of triumph in **Cilappatikāram** and more of the divine in Kannaki. If Kannaki symbolises Sakti as well as human love, Cordelia stands for grace and human love; but the divine is made more explicit in the former. If Cordelia is charged with the divine, we find Kannaki evolving into the divine. This seems to be a fundamental difference between the two. In **Antony and Cleopatra** we see this earth being transformed by a trancendental vision, but in **Cilappatikāram** there is an upward movement into another realm itself. In the beginning Kannaki seems to evolve from the macrocosm, but she is the peak of evolution. And this pattern is repeated in the overall structure of the epic also, because her downward movement is also an upward movement and earth reaches heaven and heaven comes down to earth at the end.

In Shakespeare the human partakes of the divine and when the doors of perception are cleansed, life becomes holy and infinite and the holiness of life is awe-inspiring. In Ilango, Kannaki's evolution shows that the human can become a cosmic power and that transcendence is equally awe-inspiring. And all these converge in their treatment of nature-myth. In both, the human tragedy is related to the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. In both we find a correspondence between the human heart and the cosmic processes and love is the governing principle in both the orders. The regenerative powers of the cosmos are linked with the power of love and in both the emphasis is on the latter and the myth of nature is subordinated to that of the human heart. Love is seen as tne underlying principle of man and his milieu and that makes man experience a kind of deathlessness. If love triumphs over justice in the human consciousness, it is related to the triumph of Sakti or grace over fate in the cosmic order in both.

But there are differences. There is a greater tension between man and nature in Shakespeare, eventhough it is also suggestive of, and leads to, a synthesis. If in Ilango nature is less contaminated by human deeds, Shakespearean involvement with nature seems to be greater and nature in Shakespeare is intertwined with the human consciousness. But in Ilango there is more of the evolution from the natural to the human and vice versa and we have more nature gods also, such as Kotravai, Mayoon and Murugan.

Lastly, if there is the triumph of love in the divine order in both, it is more explicit in **Cilappatikāram**, and in Shakespeare it is only suggested or, to put it in other

words, it is only seen in human terms. In Ilango, on the other hand, we see the god of terror, Kotravai, evolving into the god of love, Muruga. Of course it is Kotravai's love that is manifested as Muruga, and god's terror is seen as god's love. In Shakespeare also love is primary and this is made more explicit in Wordsworth:

To fear and love
To love as first and chief, for there fear ends,
Be this ascribed:. . . .
. . . .
. . . From love, for here
Do we begin and end, all grandeur comes,
All truth and beauty, from pervading love,
That gone, we are as dust.[18]

And this is said to be the secular parallel to Milton's:

To God more glory; more goodwill to Man
From God, and over wrath shall grace abound.[19]

If Wordsworth seems to be closer to the Eastern thought, it is because he insists on the explicit triumph of love.

In Aeschylus and Sophocles also we have something akin to it. In **The Orestia** Aeschylus brings out the triumph of mercy and in Sophocles also according to Bowra there is a parallel development. "There is certainly a difference between the confident trust of the last plays and the dark hints of the middle plays. In the last three, the ways of the gods are presented in a way that satisfies the human conscience. The participation in man's lives is shown to be governed by such rules as men set up for themselves; they display right and justice in the human sense of the words. At the end of his life Sophocles seems to have wished to demonstrate the justice no less than the power of the gods.[20] It is interesting to note that poets belonging to such diverse cultures, Sophocles and Aeschylus, Shakespeare and Ilango should have groped towards a loving and just world order, which becomes more and more human also. Of course in Sophocles the progress is from the sense of power to the sense of the justice of gods, but Shakespeare and Ilango seem to go further and show the power of something akin to grace and mercy. The concept of grace becomes more prominent in the last plays of Shakespeare. If in Shakespeare, the Calvinist sense of sin finds its complement in a sense of love, in Ilango the Jain sense of Karma finds its complement in the ecstatic vision of Murugan. It is interesting to see that there is a common core in Shakespeare and Ilango

which can be related to the Greek and Vedic traditions respectively and their development from those positions also shows similar tendencies -- from an impersonal to more personal god and from a sense of terror to a sense of love both in the cosmos and man. But in both, the cosmic only accompanies and does not influence the human action and this accounts for the secularism of both.

Though the tragic themes of the two writers are compared in Chapters III to VI in the conventional way, they were divided into three major inter - related components -- fate versus guilt, death versus love, and in Chapter IV we related the study of them to characters, mainly women, and characters to the cosmic order. All this could be treated as thematology in so far as they were postulated as problems, and also as opposites. To quote Peterson, 'Every problem signals the posing of a question, which must find an answer in the idea; and an idea can find poetic formulation only in the solution of problems. As regards the problems, what Jaspers exemplified as the "antinomic structure of existence" in the so-called Grenzsituationen, applies to literature as well: "Each of these cases--conflict, death, chance, guilt--implies an antinomy. Strife and mutual help, life and death, chance and design, guilt and the sense of redemption are tied together, as the one does not exist without the other.[21] Frenzel and Trousell also agree that the theme is a larger category, though there is a particularisation of motifs.[22]

We could also break these tragic themes into small units such as seeming versus being and possession versus love. Here again there is a close parallel between **Cilappatikāram** and **King Lear.** Lear's questions to the daughter show a confusion of values and he tried to equate love with his possessions and also wanted a demonstration of love. He knew the true nature of love finally when it was given unasked; at that time he finds his true identity also. His initial questions to his three daughters also point to the desparate attempt to define his being in relation to others as well as his possessions. But he finds his self later in boundless love which he shows to all, and which Cordelia showers upon him, wherein the initial give-and-take situation is beautifully parodied and nullified because what is given is more than what is asked. Kovalan's eulogy of Kannaki is full of imagery denoting wealth and sensuous sweet e.g., flawless gold and pearl, fragrance, honey, the jewel not seen in the hills and the ambrosia not seen in the sea.[23] Throughout there is a characteristic juxtaposition of the material and the sensuous, similar to, though not identical with, Shylock's combining of ducats with daughter in the **Merchant of Venice.**

But when Kovalan comes back from Madhavi, Kannaki offers both her love and possessions unasked and like Lear kneeling before Cordelia, we find later Kovalan almost touching her feet when he, full of remorse, leaves her to sell the anklet. His relationship with Madhavi also fails in relation to loss of wealth; he seems to have developed a sense of inferiority after having lost his wealth. Here we find Madhavi's love expressed by her total renunciation.

The theme of seeming and being, of appearance and reality, is also interlocked with the theme of possession versus love in both. Kannaki and Cordelia are unable to pretend to be what they are not; in the case of Madhavi and Cleopatra there is a progress from drama to reality. Iago says, "I am not what I am",[24] Pandiyan Nedunchezhiyan (there is no equation between him and Iago) cries, "I am not the King; I am only the robber".[25] Both King Lear and Kovalan turn from appearance to reality. The use of inner drama in **Hamlet** and **Kānalvari** in **Cilappatikāram** also contributes to this theme. In Shakespearean tragedy, particularly in **Hamlet**, drama becomes a metaphor for life. In fact in most of the scenes there is a play, within the play-- for example, Ophelia talking to Hamlet when her father is behind the scene. And the real play within the play is only an intensified version of this technique. The play within play suggests a sort of stillness in action. Hamlet is playing a role in a sense different from that of the actors playing a role, and in the critical moment we find life making inroads into drama when Claudius and his queen leave the play in the middle. In Kanalvari, both Kovalan and Madhavi are enacting a play within a play and they seem to be addressing not each other. The Cauvery-King myth in the songs enacts a deep division in the two singers, and the very expression becomes experience and one and the same song is interpreted differently by the two characters. Because both closely identify themselves with their personae, there is a violation of artistic distance and decorum which is a manifestation of their division. Art encroaches upon reality and 'play' becomes 'the thing' -- tragically so.

But all these themes were subordinated to the major questions of tragedy such as fate and free will, guilt and love, justice and mercy. These themes, we saw, were realised in the two tragedians differently, but there were significant similarities and wherever they agree, we seem to be nearer literary universals.

According to some comparatists, themes are more individualised, whereas motifs are more general and abstract;

themes relate to characters and motifs to situations.[26] The motifs in both the tragedians are elemental passions and conflicts--and they are related to the primal bonds and ties. It is the agony of the father in **King Lear** or the son in **Hamlet**, love poisoned in **Othello**, and violation of basic bonds though in more political terms in **Macbeth.** In **Cilappatikāram** also there is a sense of betrayal and of a man torn between two loyalties. In all cases death comes on the least expected occasion, though most inevitable.

Though there are significant differences in terms of culture, the sex motif plays an important part in both the writers. Shakespeare emphasises on the father's/mother's relationship with son/daughter, whereas Ilango deals only with husband - wife relationship and the two treatments show cultural variation in spite of certain universal properties. Both Kannaki and Madhavi are cheated by their husband as well as fate, and the loss of Kovalan affects them profoundly; one becomes an avenging god of fury and the other, a holy nun. Kannaki's tearing of her breasts can also be contrasted with Madhavi, giving up amorous life. In one case, there is a primitive transformation of eros into destructive power, and in the other a sublimation of the same sacrifice, but both end with spiritual love. The destruction or transformation of love seems to be the basic motif in all these tragedies.

The conflict between love and higher or social obligations can also be seen in **Othello** and **Cilappatikāram.** Both Shakespeare and Ilango go beyond the personal or social tragedies to some thing deeper and universal. The Tamil tradition emphasises the mother instinct and the virgin worship--may be there is a conflict between Kannaki's role as a mother--even to her husband and her role as a wife or lover; paradoxically she evolves into a universal mother, though she had no child of her own. It is possible to relate Kannaki to the motifs of marriage and goddess such as Minakshi as Shulman does,[27] but we linked her mainly with Muruga because in him there is the synthesis of destruction and fertility, of Dionysian frenzy and Apollonian serenity, of terror and love--and she is also explicitly linked with Muruga in the text. Again he is also the prototype of art, though not explicitly tragic art in the Tamil tradition. In Muruga there is fusion of myth and aesthetics (the word Muruga means 'fertility and beauty') and he stands for the equilibrium of the impulses of terror and love.

That is why, the compounding of terror and love in the world order of Shakespeare and the evolution from terror to love in world order of Ilango were related to the similar

aesthetic impacts of the two tragedians concerned in Chap.II. The study of the use of choric characters in Shakespeare and Ilango was also illuminating from this point of view. In both, the common people show affinity with the principal protagonists and they not only illuminate their situations, but by suffering with them partially, they distance and magnify the tragic emotions. Here again there are differences. The choric characters in Shakespeare humanise their heroes whereas in Ilango they deify Kannaki. The attitude of the choric characters to the heroes in Shakespeare is one of intimacy and love; in Ilango they show an awe. Secondly, Shakespeare's choric characters are more individualised than Ilango's and in this respect also Ilango shows a closer kinship with Greek tragedians and the group dances in **Cilappatikāram** are cathartic. The progress from the dance-cum-song of the huntsmen to that of the hill-men is parallel to our progress from terror to serenity. The difference between Shakespeare and Ilango is minimal but it is there because the note of serenity and synthesis is more explicit in Ilango.

Finally, we saw that the core of Shakespearean tragedy is the myth of Dionysus, eventhough that can also be related to the Christ pattern and the core of **Cilappatikāram** is the myth of Muruga who is celebrated at the end. Both Dionysus and Christ are suffering gods and if Muruga also symbolises primordial energy there is more serenity and triumph in him. But Nietzsche makes a distinction between Dionysus and Christ. "Dionysus versus crucified: there you have the antithesis. It is not a difference in regard to this martyrdom -- it is a difference in the meaning of it. Life itself, its eternal fruitfulness and recurrence, creates torment, destruction and the will to annihilation. . . . One will see that the problem is the meaning of suffering: whether a Christian meaning or a tragic meaning. In the former case, it is supposed to be the path to a holy existence. In the latter case, being is counted as holy enough to justify even a monstrous amount of suffering".[28]

But Nietzsche seems to exaggerate the difference and it is the similarity rather than the difference between the Christ situation and that of Dionysus that must be emphasised. On the other hand Muruga seems to differ from both in so far as the element of strife and agony is reduced here. If Muruga is also human, he suggests more transcendence than the other. Of course, this is only an interpretation, and not a value judgement either on the two traditions or the two tragedians.

If the artistic effect of Shakespearean tragedy can be

associated, though not fully, with the effect of the dance celebrating Dionysus, the artistic effect of **Cilappatikāram** can be related to the orgiastic release of the folk celebrating the triumph of Muruga, and both only show the attempt of different cultures to transcend the agony of individuation through art and prayer.

And we also saw that the difference in the two worships accounts for the difference in the genres of **Cilappatikāram** and Greek Tragedies as well as Shakepeare's. If the awe of one dance evolves into the epic stillness of **Cilappatikāram, absorbing** tragic agony, the strife of the Dionysian dance has evolved into (of course, it has been a long, long journey) the Shakespearean tragic music, suggesting an epic stillness. We have the reconciliation of the Dionysian and the Apollonian in both, but the emphasis varies. If **Cilappatikāram** ends with an epic awe and **King Lear** with the tragic reverie, they are not mutually exclusive. **Cilappatikāram** attains and imparts Apollonian peace subsuming the Dionysian frenzy and in Shakespeare's tragedies as in Greek Tragedy, we have more the Dionysian thrill, but that also leads to the peace that passeth all understanding.

Parallel to the stillness, absorbing dynamism in tragic emotion, is the stillness generating or absorbing dynamism in the tragic action in both and this again is reflected in the spatio-temporal order of the works of the two writers. Hamlet is inactive in the beginning while there is so much action around him, but later there is a synthesis of his action with the rest of the action around him. There is more dynamism in his final equilibrium and this is comparable to the evolution of Kannaki. The initial stasis of Kannaki can be compared with her final poise, and all action revolves around her when she is the still centre. There is a contrast between the inaction of Hamlet and the action of Claudius--in more than one sense; the sense of physical action as well as seeming. In **Othello** also, we have this contrast between the stasis of Desdemona and the action of Iago. In **King Lear** again there is a contrast between the stasis of Cordelia and the scheming and action of the other sisters. In **Macbeth,** the hero himself is the actor like Claudius and Duncan stands for the stasis.

There is a contrast between action and stillness within each scene in Shakespeare. The time scheme of the plays and **Cilappatikāram** is significant in this sense. The sense of chronological time is countered by the dramatic stillness in all the plays, particularly in the double time of **Othello.** Even in **Macbeth** where there is greatest motion, there is

also greatest compression, and all the actions of Macbeth are only the radiations of that one moment of crime when time seems to have had a stop or had begun to bear the weight of sin. In **Cilappatikāram,** in **vañci kāṇṭam** we see the contrast between Kannaki's stillness and evolution of history.

At the end of the plays of Shakespeare we find restoration of order and reunion of people upto a point. Lear and Cordelia are united at least spatially after separation and quest. We find a reconciliation between people and resto.ation of unity (of the three parts of Tamilnadu) in Ilango to a greater extent. All this would confirm the Hegelian notion of the need for synthesis and reconciliation of the tragically divided cosmic order, or the Nietzschean interpretation of Greek tragedy as a conflict between energy and equipoise, of individuation and order, of Dionysus and Apollo.

Thus we saw that the tragic genre is a universal but it has different manifestations in different cultures, and genre is neither simply theme nor form, but both, and our study saw the interdependence of the two. In both the writers the core seems to be a fusion of dance, lyric and music--but evolved into the dynamic dialectics of drama in one case and the sublime and sculptural harmony of the dramatic epic in the other. In **Cilappatikāram** there is a verbal enactment of dance and a basically dramatic conception of life on which the epic dome is erected. The drama bursts the boundaries of epic narration often; even the narration is dramatic and there is more presentation than representation: we have both dramatic reporting and reporting drama. Just as in Shakespearean tragedy there is the evolution of dithyramb and choric poetry of Greek tragedy into drama with dialogue, in **Cilappatikāram** we see the evolution of a narrative-dramatic literary form based on choric songs of various kinds.

And implicit in all these discussions is the question of the close kinship between the Greek tragedians and Ilango, in general, between the cult of Dionysus and Muruga in particular. And is it possible to see any actual contact or influence? As we said clearly in the introduction, that is not our concern. But we consider it proper to take up this question **as a corollary to our enquiry** and we will be content with a few observations.

In the **Bacchae** of Euripides there is a reference to Dionysus having conquered Asia also.

And Asia all, that by the salt sea lies
In proud embattled cities, motleywise
Of Hellene and Barbarian interwrought,
And now I come to Hellas having taught
All the world else my dances and my rite
Of mysteries, to show me in men's sight
Manifest God.[29]

E.O.James also speaks of another saga which tells of the penetration of the mystery of Dionysus into the interior of Asia and India, but he hastens to add that "this is probably an attempt to bolster up the campaign of Alexander the Great in the orient rather than a reminiscence of the real spread of the cult."[30] But the parallel is also very impressive. Both are associated with love and fertility and are supposed to descend upon the dancers. Jane Harrison's discussion of the Hymn of the Kouretes also brings out the magical effect of this dance:

"The worshippers dance round the alter of the Kouros because here the shielded Nurturers took the Kouros, an immortal child from Rhea, and with the noise of beating feet hid him away. The coming seasons are to be fruitful, Dike is to possess mankind, the Kouros by leaping in conjunction with his worshippers is to bring fertility for flocks and fields, prosperity to cities and sea-borne ships, and young citizens..... Moreover the words addressed to him are not, as we should expect and find in the ordinary worship addressed to an Olympian, a prayer, but an injunction, a command, 'come', 'leap'. Strangest of all, the god, it would seem, performs the same ritual as his worshippers, and it is by performing that ritual that he is able to confer his blessings. He leaps when his attendant worshippers leap and the land is fertile."[31]

This can easily be compared with the dance-cum-song of the mountain girls in **Kunrakkuravai**, where also the emphasis is on the ecstatic dance of Muruga as well as the Kuravas. It is almost tempting to see some link between the words Kourete (Greek) and **Kuravar** (Tamil) **Rhea** (Greek) and Kotravai (Tamil), **Chorus** (Greek) and **Kuravai** (Tamil), **Daimon** (Greek) and **Teyvam** (Tamil) respectively and the idea of youth is predominant in the Greek **Kouros** and the Tamil **Murugan.** It is interesting to see that in the Tamil tradition Murugan is married to a daughter of the Kuravas and Kannaki is also described by the Kuravas as **Vaḷḷi.** It is also interesting to note here that Kannaki is recognised as the daimon of region and she is associated with the Venkai tree. One is reminded of Frazer's comment on the blasted oak which was taken as a symbol of life by the Greeks.[32]

Euripides has also referred to the offering of hair to Hippolytus by the maids[33] and in the cult of Muruga also this is an important initiation rite. Again we can find a parallel between the Greek and Tamil traditions because in both we have "the fusion of the old daimonic magical ritual which lent the forms (and) the new ... saga which lent the heroic content."[34] In **Cilppatikāram** also we see the heroic tradition of worshipping the dead hero (**Naṭukal**) and the worship of Muruga blended together.

But how far these similarities are due to actual influence and who influenced whom, it is very difficult to establish and it is beyond the scope of this investigation. Arnold Toynbee echoing Tarn refers to the resurrection of the Hellenic art through the religious power of the Mahayana: "The art of Gandhara was born of Buddhist piety utilising Yavana techniques."[35] He also says that the Buddha statue of the Mahayana was the result of the contact with the Greeks and agrees with Tarn that "the Buddha statue played its part in the conversion of the Buddha from a man into a God which took place in the Mahayana."[36] But he hastens to add that the Indian artists accepted the Hellenic device of anthropomorphism but discarded the Apollonian type in favour of a more spiritual representation of of their saviour.[37] Similarly, both in the myths of Muruga and Kannaki, we can see a sublimation of the Greek pattern, but the nature and amount of influence cannot be established.

Kanakasabai has discussed the account of Megasthenes and of Pliny associating the Pandiya dynasty with the daughter of Heracles.

> "Ancient Tamil poems seem to support this tradition because they refer to a woman as the founder of the Pandyan Dynasty. She appears to have been subsequently worshipped as a goddess in Madura. In the **Cilappatikāram** she is spoken of as **Mathurāpathi** or "Queen of Madura" and she is described as dressed half in the attire of a warrior and half in that of a princess. The **Maṇimēkalai** also alludes to her as **Mathurāpathi.** Taking together the tradition as reported by Megasthenes and Pliny and the allusions in ancient Tamil Works, it appears that a princess who belonged to the race of the Pandus, then reigning at Mathura on the banks of the Jumna, led a colony and founded Dakshina-Mathura on the banks of the Vaigai.... It is quite possible that owing to this personal deformity she was obliged to seek a husband in a foreign country."[38]

On the other hand, Dr.T.P.Meenakshisundaranar in his

Foreword to Kanakasabai's **Twin Epics** says:

> "The art of the public woman and the cult of the vestal virgin combined in Greece to produce the most accomplished woman-hood, in spite of its inherent and potential dangers to the society and to the individual. Perhaps, some such institution blossomed forth in all its grandeur and glory, in the Tamil country, enriched by the Hellenic contact. The Parathai of the Sanga Age cannot be understood otherwise. Mary Magdalene was the finest product of the Hellenic culture and she was made whole and perfect, at the feet of Jesus on the Cross, where she stood transformed into the embodiment of Holy Love--the new spirit vivifying dead beauty. Mathavi, the beloved of Kovalan, the husband of Kannaki was one such woman; in her daughter Manimekalai the first product of the Tamil Paratthiar family, womanhood reaching its perfection of ideal."[39]

There are references to the Yavana Warriors in **Cilappatikāram** itself.[40] All this would make us believe that there was some link between the two cultures. But there are also differences. Whatever we may say about the institution of harlots, the Kannaki myth can be associated with the cult of Mother Goddess, whose origin is again disputable, but as we have argued in the chapter on **The Cosmic Tragedy: Nature myths**, if the Ramayana myth shows affinity with the Egyptian myth of Osiris, the myth of Kannaki and her prototype Kotravai shows affinity with that of Sumerian or Assyrian Mother Goddess, because in both the female god is more important than the male god. "By the side of Cybele-Ishtar, Attis-Tammuz dwindles to insignificance and Nerthus-Ishtar seems to stand in solitary grandeur without the attendance of any masculine consort."[41] In Egypt it is the reverse, but as Toynbee has pointed out Isis "eventually eclipsed Osiris in her triumphal progress from the Egyptian home to her Hellenic mission-field."[42] And this pattern can be seen even in Shakespeare's **Antony and Cleopatra** where the Roman Values are subsumed in the Isis myth. But still the Greek origin for the Kannaki cult is questionable. Probably the contact with the Greeks might have resulted in the revival of the Mother cult deep rooted in this culture. This falls in line with the view of Hudson who sees in the ritual annual marriage of the goddess Meenakshi with Shiva, the process of the matrilineal system being reconciled with the patrilineal one.[43] This also seems to be the view of Prof.Chatterji who has associated the Proto-Dravidians with the tribes of Asia Minor. "The name Uma recalls Ma, the Great Mother of the Asianic and East Mediterranean peoples:

and Durga as one of the common epithets of the Mother Goddess Uma, we can compare with Traqas, a deity mentioned in the Lycian inscription of Asia Minor.[44] "The Dravidians appear to have brought to India from their original homeland in the islands of the Aegean Sea--Greece and Asia Minor. Ma or Kubele (Cybele) and Atthis, or Hepit and Teshup, the great Asianic Mother Goddess and Father God, the former having as her symbol or vehicle the lion, the latter the bull, form undoubtedly one of the bases on which the Shiva-Uma cult of Hindu India grew up."[45]

So, we may conclude that the cult of Kannaki can be related to the still more ancient worship of Mother Goddess which shows affinities with similar cults in Asia Minor, which was possibly revived by association with the Greeks. And here as in our discussion of the relationship between Dionysus and Muruga we are in the difficult and dangerous realm of conjecture and our aim is only to indicate them as a corollary to our aim of discussing parellels between Shakespeare and Ilango as tragedians.

The descriptive-comparative study in tune with the American School of Comparative Literature can lead on to and enrich a historical study which looks for connections. Comparative literature, in this sense, is "a branch of literary history: it is the study of international spiritual relations...."[46] But our focus has been mainly descriptive and we will be content with saying that **Cilappatikāram** shows enough affinities with the Greek and Sumerian traditions which may be related to contacts or a common core or both and that needs further exploration. In fact we see in **Cilappatikāram** a synthesis of several strata: on the one hand it looks back to Sumeria and Greece and on the other it envisages a unified modern India, and as we have argued throughout, it has a spiritual kinship with Shakespearean tragedies which symbolise the full blossoming of the modern consciousness of the humanist Europe. **Cilappatikāram** thus becomes the story of the synthesis of a national culture and that is also the story of the evolution of a universal culture. That is why, to recall what we said in the beginning, great literature is always contemporary and universal.

NOTES
CHAPTER

1. T.S.Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent", **The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism** (1929; rpt. London: Methuen, 1969), pp.47-59.

2. Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, **Theory of Literature** (New York: Harcourt, 1949), p.50.

3. Ibid, p.50.

4. Shelley, **Adonais,** v.52.

5. Rene Wellek, "Name and Nature of Comparative Literature, **Discriminations: Further concepts in Criticism,** London: Yale University Press, 1970) p.1-36.

6. Ibid, p.36.

7. Theodore Spencer, (Echoing Ben Jonson), **Shakespeare and the Nature of Man: Lowell Lectures,** (1942; rpt. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971), p.208.

8. Ibid, pp.208-9.

9. George Steiner. **The Death of Tragedy,** (London Faber 1967), p.46.

10. Ibid, p.46.

11. Edward Sapir, **Language: An Introduction to the Study of speech** (1921; rpt. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1949) pp.222-225.

11a. David E.Jones, **The Plays of T.S.Eliot,** (1960; rpt. Routledge and Kegan Paul 1960), p.12.

12. E.C. James, **Comparative Religion: An Introductory and Historical Study,** (1938; rpt. London, Methuen and Co. 1961), p.22.

13. Alain Danielon, trans. **Shilappadikāram (The Ankle Braclet)** by Prince Ilango Adigal (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1967), p.ix.
But opinions vary on this. Dr.T.P.Meenakshisundaranar in his **History of Literature** (Annamalai University Publication, 1965), p.42, refers to Nilakantasastri's view that the epic might have been written in the fifth century and says that attempts to place it **later** cannot be accepted.

14. Wellek 'Name and Nature of Comparative Literature",p.19.

15. G.Muliyil, "Why Shakespeare for us?" **Shakespeare came to India,** ed.C.D.Narasimhaiah (Bombay: Popular Prahasan, 1964), pp.5-8.

16. V.Y.Kantak, "Shakespeare in India", **Proceedings of XXII Annual Session of the All India English Teachers' Conference** (Trichy: The Indian Association of English Studies, 1971), pp.49-53.

17. Muliyil, Why Shakespeare for us? p.7.

18. Ibid, p.8.

19. **Macbeth,** II 12-13.

20. **Cilappatikāram** III, XXIX, 10.

21. Aristotle, **Poetics,** trans. Butcher, **Aristotle's theory of poetry and Fine Art.** (Ludhiana; Lyoll Book Dept. Publishers, 1967), pp.107-111.

22. N.N.Venkatasamy, ed. **Cilappatikāram Original with Notes,** (1942, rpt. Tirunelveli: Saiva Siddhanta Publications, 1966), p.16.

23. S.R.Margabandhu Sarma, **Cilampiṉ Irasaṉai** (1948 rpt. Madras: Tholkappiar Noolagam, 1961), p.75.

24. Butcher, Aristotle's Theory, p.19.

25. Quoted in Wellek and Warren, **Theory of Literature,** p.229.

26. Ibid, p.227.

27. Erich Auerback **Mimesis: The representation of Reality in Western Literature** 1953: rpt. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), p.5.

28. Ibid, p.227.

29. Ibid, p.228.

30. Butcher, Aristotle's Theory, pp.7-12, pp.17-18.

31. Dr.T.P.Meenakshisundaranar, **Kuṭimakkaḷ Kāppiyam** (1961; rpt. Madurai: Meenakshi Puttaka Nilayam, 1971) p.40.

32. Dr. T.P. Meenakshisundaranar, **A History of Tamil Literature** (Annamalai Nagar: Annamalai University, 1965), p.38.

33. P.R. Subramaniam, "Folklore as the Precursor of Literature", **Four Papers on Literature and Language** (Madurai: Meenakshi Puthaka Nilayam, 1968), pp.13-27, p.16-21.

34. Among others Helen Gardner has discussed Eliot's variations of the tradition and exploitation of speech rhythms, **The Art of T.S.Eliot** (1949; rpt. London: 1968), pp.25-35.

35. Francis Fergusson, **The Idea of a Theatre: A Study of Ten Plays** 1949; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1951), pp.26-27.

36. Ibid, p.27.

37. Wellek and Warren, **Theory of Literature,** p.191.

38. Sarma, **Cilampin̲ Iracan̲ai,** pp.76-90.

39. Adiyarku Nallar, **Cilappatikāra Mūlamum Arumpatavuraiyum Adiyārkkunallār Uraiyum** ed. Dr.U.Ve. Saminathaiyar (1892: rpt. Sri Thiyagaraja Vilasa Publications, 1968), pp.8-10.

40. V.Y.Kantak "Aristotle and Bharata: Western and Eastern Dramatic Modes" **Literary Criticism: European and Indian Traditions** ed. C.D.Narasimhaiah n.d.), p.113. Mysore (University of Mysore).

41. Ibid.

42. David John McCutchion, "Whether Critical Appreciation is Bound by considerations of Religion, Country and Tradition". Ibid, pp.21-40.

43. Ibid, p.40.

44. Raymond Williams, **Modern Tragedy** (London: Chatto and Windus, 1966), p.54.

45. In Freud's Monograph **Beyond the Pleasure Principle** (London, 1922) Ananke becomes an image of the death instinct and this has been questioned by McCollom, Tragedy (New York: Macmillan, 1957), p.88.

46. **Cilappatikāram, Patikam,** Some Scholars are of the view that Patikam was a later addition. Compare: M.P. Sivagnanam, **Cilappatikārat Tiran̲āyvu** (Madras: Poonkodi Patippakam), pp.5-16.

47. **Patikam,** 55-56. The next line again speaks of the operation of an inexorable law. Sometimes scholars have attempted to see them in isolation. But Ilango seems to have felt that all these aspects are part of a complex insight which are suggested by the **symbol** of "Cilampu" in which we see the convergence of all these insights.

48. K.Vellai Varanan, "Iḷaṅgō Adikaḷ Kālattuc Camaiya Nilai," **Journal of the Annamalai University,** Part-A Humanities, Vol.XXVI, 1969, 114-148.

49. We may call it the Bakti Version of Jainism - a Jainism which is beginning to lose its identity.

50. Arnold J.Toynbee, **A Study of History,** (1939; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1963), V, 135 (F.N).

51. Ibid, pp.553-54.

52. Nietzsche, **The Birth of Tragedy, or The Spirit of Music,** trans. Clifton P.Fadiman, **The Philosophy of Nietzsche** New York, The Modern Library, 1927), p.104. Walter Kaufmann has referred to the possibility of the Bhraman culture being mentioned Cf. **Basic Writings of Nietzsche** (New York: The Modern Library).

53. Steiner, **The Death of Tragedy,** p.292.

54. Louis L.Martz, "The Saint as Tragic Hero: Saint Joan and Murder in the Cathedral, **The Tragic Themes in Western Literature,** ed. Cleanth Brooks. 1955; rpt. New Haven; Yale University Press, 1956, pp.150-178.

55. Morris Weitz, **Hamlet and the Philosophy of Literary Criticism** (Chicago: Chicago University, 1964), p.308.

56. Ibid, p.310.

57. Kenneth Muir, **Shakespeare's Tragic Sequence** (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1972), p.12.

58. L.C.Knights, "Shakespeare: **King Lear and the Great Tragedies. The Age of Shakespeare,** ed. Boris Ford **The Pelican Guide to English Literature:** (1955. rpt. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1969) pp.228-56.

59. A.C. Bradley, **Shakespearean Tragedy** (1904; rpt. London: Macmillan, 1967), pp.3-4. and Bradley, "Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra" **Oxford Lectures on Poetry** (1900; rpt. London: Macmillan, 1965).

60. L.C. Knights, "Shakespeare: **King Lear** and the Great **Tragedies**, pp.228-266.

61. Compare, K.D. Sethna, **Sri Aurobindo on Shakespeare** (Pondichery: Sri Aurobindo Ashram 1965).

62. In his book **Iḷaṅgōviṉ Iṉkavi** (Madurai: Navalar Puttaka Nilayam 1969) he analyses the rich texture of **Cilappatikāram.**

63. Dr.M.Varadarajan in his book (see Bibliography) gives importance to Ilango's ethics and insight into human nature.

64. He has not only edited **Cilappatikāram** along with **Maṇimēkalai** but also discussed its dominant themes with reference to **Cilampu** in his **Entac Cilampu** (1964: rpt. Madras: Pari Nilayam, 1971).

65. He sees **Cilappatikāram** as an oracle of nationalism and humanism in **Cilappatikāram Tiraṉāyvu** (Madras: Poonkodi Pathippakam, 1973).

66. **Tamil Kāppiyaṅkaḷil Avala Vīrarkaḷ Āyvukkōvai,** Third Seminar, Annamalai University, 1971) pp.300-36.

67. **Cilampu Vaḻic Cintaṉai** (Coimbatore: Mercury Publishers 1973), pp.32-41.

68. **Whitman and Bhārati: A Comparative Study.** Diss., Annamalai University, 1967.

69. **Kamban and Milton: A Comparative Study,** Diss., Madurai University, 1973.

70. **Iḷaṅgōviṉ Pāttirappaṭaippu** (Madurai: Meenakshi Puttaka Nilayam 1964).

71. He has translated **King Lear, Hamlet** and **Macbeth** and in his recent book **Teyvamākkavi** (Madras: Palaniyappa Brothers, 1974), he has compared Kamban with Shakespeare and emphasised the importance of 'literary confluences', pp.161-180.

72. His **Cilambiṉ Iracaṉai** first published as **Cilappatikāram** (Irasaṉai) (Karaikkudi: Ilakkiya Patippakam 1948), inaugurated the study of **Cilappatikāram** as a tragedy. See also bibliography.

73. Dr.T.P.Meenakshisundaranar's **Kutimakkaḷkāppiyam** (1961 rpt. Madurai: Meenakshi Puttaka Nilayam, 1971) relates **Cilappatikāram** to the Sangam tradition and also studies its dramatic components. **Kāṉal Vari** (Coimbatore: Kalaikkatir Veliyitu, 1961) studies the symbolic significance of certain events in depth.

CHAPTER II

1. Alfred North Whitehead, **Science and the Modern World** (New York: New Amb Lib:, 1948), p.11.

2. **Macbeth,** I vii. 7.

3. **Hamlet,** III, 1, 78-80.

4. **Macbeth,** I, vii, 6.

5. **King Lear,** I, i, 15.

6. **King Lear,** I, i, 1-24.

7. **King Lear,** I, i, 287-300.

8. **Macbeth,** III, iv, 136-40.

9. **Cilappatikāram,** I, i, 25-28.

10. Ibid, I, iii, 155-63

11. Ibid, I, iii, 170-72

12. Ibid, II, xxiii, 138-172

13. Ibid, I, ii 82-89 - In particular lines 82-83: The hero with the garland spent his days happily with a sense of pride along with the heroine with the garland of radiant flowers.

14. Ibid, I, ii **Veṇpa.**

15. Ibid, I, i, 25-. 35-39.

16. Ibid, I, i, 28-29.

17. Ibid, I, i, 62-63 - In their blessing the negatives occur three times. They wish that lovers should **not** be separated, the lover's hand **should not** be removed; they should live **without** any evil (stain or suffering).

18. Ibid, I, ii, 80-4.

19. Ibid, I. ii, 85-90.

20. Ibid, I, vii, 55.

21. Margabandhu Sarma: **Cilappatikāram** (rasanai) (Pudukkottai: Kalaippannai Publications, 1948), p.35-36; repeated in the revised edition also.

22. H.D. Kitto, **Form and Meaning in Drama** (London: Methuen, 1948), p.337.

23. Geoffrey Brerton, **Principles of Tragedy** (London: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1968), p.95.

24. Bradley, **"Hegel's Theory of Tragedy",** in Oxford Lectures on Poetry.

25. We do not mean that characters in Greek tragedies and **Cilappatikāram** are not properly motivated. The only thing is that the authors do not elaborate their motives.

26. A.C. Bradley, **Shakespearean Tragedy** (1904; rpt. London: Macmillan, 1967), p.29-30.

27. Hamlet, III, iv 172-77 --To say that Hamlet is involved in unnecessary guilt does not mean that Hamlet is not morally responsible for his act i.e., his killing of Polonius. In fact, he clearly accepts it and says: "I do repent". And this consciousness of guilt is also the beginning of wisdom. But some would question whether Hamlet is guilty at all. Even though we do not agree with Spurgeon and others who believe that he also represents disease, we believe that he too is being influenced by the diseased state. He is also guilty in trying to run away from the responsibilities in order to avoid guilt. And paradoxically, now he ceases to be guilty because, he has begun to accept his guilt. One important meaning of the play is the paradox of the human situation: willy - nilly, we are caught in a guilty universe, but at the same time we can escape guilt if we do our duty without involving our ego.

28. Kitto, **Form and Meaning**, p.327.

29. Caroline Spurgeon, **Shakespeare's Imagery and what it tells us** (1935; rpt. Cambridge University Press, 1961), pp.378-9. Compare Clemen, **The Development of Shakes peare's Imagery** (1951; rpt. London: Methuen, 1961), p.113.

He relates this to the one real event which begins the play and adds Hamlet's father describes in that passage how the poison invades the body during sleep and how the healthy organism is destroyed from within, not having a chance to defend itself against attack. But this now becomes the **leitmotif** of the imagery: the individual occurrence is expanded into a symbol for the central problem of the play.

But Kenneth Muir, in **Shakespeare the Professional** (London: Heinmann, 1973), p.105 says that Clemen seems to blur the distinction between the effects of poisoning and those of an organic disease; and it is important to observe that it is not merely in Hamlet's imagination that the disease imagery persists: it is used by other characters as well.
But with all this, Spurgeon's view that Shakespearean concern is with the working of a universal force seems to be valid, provided we do not equate Hamlet with the disease.

30. **Antony and Cleopatra,** II, v, 762.

31. Kitto, **Form and Meaning,** pp.336-7.

32. Aeschylus, **The Choephroe** trans. Gilbert Murray **The Complete Plays of Aeschylus,** (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1952), p.922-23.

33. John Jones, **On Aristotle and Greek Tragedy** (London: Chatto and Windus, 1962), p.94.

34. **Hamlet,** I, v, 189-90.

35. The Curses of Brabantio, Mercutio and King Lear are too well-known to require quotation.

36. **Cilappatikāram,** II, XXI, 36-37--Probably here there is more of a resolution than a curse and this also shows Ilango's emphasis on the human power to act.

37. Margabandhu Sarma, **Cilappatikāram,** p.45.

38. Auerbach, **Mimesis,** p.319.

39. Wordsworth's view endorsed by later critics. Cf.:A.M.Buchen, "The Sad Wisdom of the Mariner," **Studies in Philology,** LXI.No.4 (Oct. 1961), 669-88.

40. Hartley Granville - Barker, **Prefaces to Shakespeare** (1930; rpt. London: B.T. Batsford Ltd. 1970), No.2, p.145.

41. William Rosen, **Shakespeare and the Craft of Tragedy** (Cambridge Mass: Harward University Press. 1960) pp.122-123.

42. Cilappatikaram, I, IX, 55-56.
II, XV, 91-92
II, XVI, 91.
II, XX, 59-60.

43. **King Lear,** V, iii, 20-25.

44. **Julius Caesar,** IV, iii, 213-216.

45. **Macbeth,** IV, iii, 237-238.

46. Cilappatikāram, II, XVI, 48.

47. Ibid, II, XVI, Venpa.

48. **Macbeth**, V, v, 24-52, 1024-1025.

49. Gilbert Murray, **Aeschylus The Creator of Tragedy** (1940; rpt. Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1962), p.83.

50. **Tirukkuṟaḷ,** I, XXViii, 380.

51. Cilappatikāram, **Patikam,** 57.

52. **Tirukkuṟaḷ**, I, XXVIII.

53. **Cilappatikāram,** II, XIV, 27
II, XVI, 16, 61.
III, XXIV, 6.
II, XXV, 98.

54. Ibid, III, XXVi, 19.

55. Arnold J.Toynbee, **A Study of History,** 8th impression (1939; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1963), V,429

56. Bharati, **Pāñcālicapatam,** 67, 282. **Bārata Camutāyam** v.2.

57. Toynbee, **A Study of History,** V. 432-433.

58. Ibid, p.433.

59. Ibid, P.433.

60. Ibid, p.432.

61. John Lawlor, **The Tragic Sense in Shakespeare,** 3rd impression (1960; rpt. London: Chatto and Windus, 1969), p.75.

62. Aristotle, **On the Art of Poetry,** trans. Ingram B.Bywater (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1951), p.45.

63. H.B. Charlton, **"Romeo and Juliet" as an Experimental Tragedy", British Academy Shakespeare Literature,** 1939), pp.7-8 - quoted by Lawlor.

64. Lawlor, **The Tragic Sense,** pp.74-75.

65. Tirukootasundaram Pillai, **Cilappatikāram** (Sornammal Memorial Lectures), p.39.

66. **Aristotle's Theory,** Butcher, p.39.

67. William G. McCollom, **Tragedy** (New York: The Macmillan Co. 1957), p.85.

68. Lawlor, **The Tragic Sense,** p.84.

69. Ibid, p.77

70. Ibid, p.86.

71. Ibid, p.86 - **Romeo and Juliet,** II, iii, 3.

72. Lawlor, **The Tragic Sense,** p.86.

73. **King Lear,** V, iii, 255 ff.

74. Bradley, **"Hegel's Theory of Tragedy"**, pp.69-85.

75. Meredith, **Love's grave,** 14-15.

76. Spurgeon, **Shakespeare's Imagery,** p.154.

CHAPTER III

1. Bradley, **Shakespearean Tragedy,** p.30.

2. Ibid, p.39.

3. R.M.Frye, **Shakespeare and the Christian Doctrine** (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp.5-6.

4. Lawlor, **The Tragic Sense in Shakespeare,** pp.77-87.

5. Irving Ribner, **Patterns in Shakespearean Tragedy** (London; Methuen, 1960), p.26.

6. **Romeo and Juliet,** IV. v, 66-68.

7. Ibid, V. iii, 291-94.

8. Bradley, **Shakespearean Tragedy,** pp.37-38.

9. Spurgeon, **Shakespeare's Imagery,** pp.310-314.

10. Muir, **Shakespeare's Tragic Sequence,** p.38.

11. **Romeo and Juliet,** II, iii, 117-20.

12. Ibid, II. Vi, 4-8.

13. **Cilappatikāram**, 1, ii, **veṇpā.**

14. Dover Wilson, **What Happens in Hamlet** (1935; rpt. London: Cambridge, University Press, 1967), p.273.

15. A.S.P. Woodhouse, **"Tragic effect in Samson Agonistes" Milton, Modern Essays on Criticism,** ed. Arthur E. Barker (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965). pp.447-66.

16. **Hamlet**, IV, iii, 174-75. Compare: Fresdon Bowers, "Hamlet as Minister and Scourge", PMLA, LXX (1955), 740-44.

17. Niegal Alexander, **Poison, Play and Duel: A Study in Hamlet,** (London: Routlege and Kegan Paul, 1971) p.131. And the following quotation, "this perpetual search.... tragic" occurs p.166.

18. Mayanard Mack, "The World of Hamlet", (ed. Cleanth Brooks **Tragic themes and Western Literature,** (1955; rpt. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1956), pp.30-58.

19. Dr. B.L. Reid, **Tragic Occasions: Essays on several forms** (New York: National University Publications, 1971), p.59.

20. C.S.Lewis, **"Hamlet,The Prince or The Poem",. Proceedings of the British Academy XXVIII,** (London: Oxford University Press, 1942), 11-18.

21. Helen Gardner, "The Historical Approach Hamlet" **The Business of Criticism** (Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1959) rpt. in Alfred Harbage ed., **Shakespeare, The Tragedies : A collection of critical essays,** Twentieth Century views (Englewood Cliffs N.J: Prentice Hall, 1964), pp.61-70.

22. **The Bhagavad Gita,** Chap. IV Verse 20.

23. Fredrick Turner, **Shakespeare and Nature of Time,** (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp.93-98.

24. Eleanor Prosser, **Hamlet and Revenge** (1967; rpt. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1971), p.227.

25. **King Lear,** IV, iii, 168.

26. Rosen, **Shakespeare and The Craft of Tragedy,** p.46.

27. Coleridge, **The Ancient Mariner,** Part IV.

28. Compare Eliot's essay on "Bande laire", **Selected Essays,** p.427.

29. Northrop Frye, "King Lear: The Tragedy of Isolation," Shakespeare: King Lear, ed. Frank Kermode, A case book (London: Macmillan, 1969), pp.265-269.

30. Compare: H.D. Lewis and Robert Slater, **World Religions** (London: C.A. Watson & Co. Limited, 1966), p.45 "The two lines of reflection converge in the concept of the Absolute, the ultimate one as Brahman - Atman. We can also explain the difference by saying that accord ing to the Vedanta there is no identification with the guilty nature at the manifest level of boundaries, because one is unbounded at that level though perceiving the boundaries.

31. Toynbee, **A Study of History,** V, 419.

32. Henri Bergson, **I. Evolution Creatrice,** 24th ed. (Paris: Alcan, 1921), pp.239-58.

33. **King Lear**, IV, ii, 79-80; IV, i, 37-38; V, iii, 168-171; 1-2, 96-109 and Bradley, **Shakespearean Tragedy**, pp.271 273.

34. **King Lear**, V, iii, 9.

35. Ibid, V, iii, 20-21.

36. Ibid, V, iii, 310-11.

37. Ibid, V, iii, 321-22.

38. Ibid, V, iii, 9.

39. Ibid, V, iii, 310-11.

40. **Macbeth**, V, iii, 22-28.

41. Ibid, V, v, 17-18.

42. Ibid, I, vii, 54-59.

43. Ibid, II, ii, 12-13.

44. **Antony and Cleopatra**, I, 17.

45. Ibid, IV, XIV, 51-52.

46. Ibid, IV, XIV, 72-77.

47. Ibid, V, ii, 310.

48. Ibid, V, ii, 93-99.

49. Ibid, V, ii, 318.

50. **Cilappatikāram**, I,v, II, xii, II, xvii; III, xiv.

51. Ibid, I, 10-25.

52. Ibid, II, X XI, 51-57.

53. Avvai Duraisamy Pillai, ed. **Yasōdhara Kāviyam**, (Tirunelveli: Saiva Siddhanta Works Publications, 1970).

54. **Cilappatikāram**, II, xiii, 175.

55. Lawlor, **The Tragic sense**, p.72.

56. **Cilappatikāram**, I, IX, 55.

57. Ibid, II, XVI, 71-82.

58. Ibid, II, XXI, 36-37.

59. **King Lear,** III, ii, 6-9.

60. L.C.Knights, " King Lear, **Some Shakespearean Themes".** Anne Ridler **Shakespeare Criticism, 1935-60** (1963; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp.254-89.

61. **Cilappatikāram,** III, XXIV, 4 .

62. Ibid, III, XXIX, V.10.

63. Gardner, **The Historical Approach,** pp.61-70.

64. **Cilappatikāram**, I, i, 61-62.

65. Ibid, III, XXX, 160-164.

66. Ibid, II, XXIII, 138-178.

67. M.H. Abrams, **Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature** (London, Oxford University Press, 1971), p.275.

68. Ibid, pp.32-37.

69. **Macbeth,** II, ii, 12-13.

70. **The Bhagavad Gita,** Chapter XI, 33.

71. Wilfred Owen, The Strange Meeting, "I am the enemy you killed, my friend".

72. **King Lear,** IV, vi, 153-4.

73. Ibid, IV, vii, 57-59.

74. Ibid, V, iii, 9-11.

75. Dr. M. Varadarajan, **Iḷaṅgō Adigaḷ** (1960, rpt. Madras Pari Nilayam, 1963), pp.113-120.

76. **Cilappatikāram,** II, XIII, 90-91.

77. "The Birth of Tragedy," pp.230-310.

78. **Cilappatikaram,** III, xvi and xviii.

79. Ibid, III, XV, 178-182.

80. Ibid, Nurkaṭṭurai, 1-2.

81. Ibid, III, XXX, 156-163.

82. Ibid, II, xvi, 55-59.

83. Ibid, II, xxiii 179-180.

84. Ibid, II, xxiii, 186-187.

85. Ibid, II, XX, 78-81.

86. Knight, **The Imperial Theme,** p.346.

87. Kitto, **Form and Meaning,** p.211.

88. Bradley, **Shakespearean Tragedy,** pp.37-38.

CHAPTER IV

1. Ruskin, **Sesame and Lilies,** ed. Albert E.Roberts (London: Macmillan; 1963), p.61.

2. There is no religious connotation in the use of the word 'transcendental' here. It only refers to the fact that earthly limitations are transcended through love and the lovers become alive to a higher reality than what is visible. Compare Wilson Knight, **The Imperial Theme.** There are differences between **Antony and Cleopatra** and **Cilappatikāram** too and they are discussed later.

3. T.R. Henn, **The Harvest of Tragedy** (1956; rpt. London: Methuen, 1966), p.110.

4. John F.Danby, **Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature: A Study of King Lear** (London: Faber and Faber, **mcmlx**), pp.155-6.

5. Northrop Frye, **Anatomy of Criticism** (1958; rpt. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971), p.210.

6. Frye, pp.210-11 and Henn, p.122, agree upon this role of women in tragedy.

7. **Cilappatikāram, Nūṟkaṭṭurai.**

8. Danby, **Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature,** p.156.

9. Maud Bodkin, **Archetypal Patterns in Poetry** (1934; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p.173.

10. Knight, **The Imperial Theme,** pp.338-39.

11. Ibid, pp.338-42 and p.317.

12. Bodkin, **Archetypal Patterns,** p.197.

13. **Antony and Cleopatra,** V, XIV, 51-53.

14. Bodkin **Archetypal Patterns,** p.203.

15. Quoted Ibid, p.204.

16. Ibid, p.216.

17. The worship of Mother Goddess (to which the Kannaki myth is related) has been related to the cult of the

Great Mother Cult of Asia Minor by Suniti Kumar Chatterji in **The Vedic Age,** Vol.1 (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1951).

18. **Cilappatikāram,** III, xv, 110-114.

19. References to the prevalence of the institution of harlots are there in Tolkappiam itlself. Compare Dr. S.Ilakkuvanar, **Tolkāppiam (in English) with Critical Studies** (Madurai: Kural Neri Publishing House), pp.439-441.

20. John F.Danby "Antony and Cleopatra: A Shakespearean Adjustment" **Elizabethan and Jacobean Poets** (London: Faber and Faber, **mcmlx),** pp.128-152; p.146.

21. **Cilappatikāram,** I, viii, 55-67.

22. Compare, Lloyd, Michael, "**Cleopatra as Isis," Shakespeare Survey,** XII (1959), p.88-94.

23. **Cilappatikāram,** I, vii, 25-27; 18;59.
If the references to the Cauvery can be related to Kannaki at a deeper level, Madhavi also identifies herself with the Cauvery.

24. Robert Speaight, **Nature in Shakespearean Tragedy,** (London: Hollis and Carter, 1955), p.139; quoted in Matthew N.Proser, **Heroic Image in Five Shakespearean Tragedies.** (Princeton: Paperbacks, 1965), p.232.

25. Henn, **The Harvest,** p.108.

26. **Cilappatikāram,** I, vii, 2-4. Compare, Dr. T.P.Meenakshisundaranar, **Kanal Vari,** p.109.

27. **Cilappatikāram,** I, xiii, 87-92.

28. **Antony and Cleopatra,** V, ii, 7-8; 285-288.

29. Danby, **Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature,** p.128.

30. **Cilappatikāram,** I, ii, 37-82.

31. Frye, **Anatomy of Criticism,** p.38.

32. Ibid, p.207.

33. **Cilappatikāram,** I, ix, 64.

34. Ibid, I, ix. 72-73.

35. **Kāṉal Vari,** p.84.

36. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xii, 47-50.

37. Ibid, II, xii, 52-53.

38 S. Ramakrishnan, **Kamban and Milton: a Comparative Study,** p. 67-70. This thesis was available only after this chapter was done. Ramakrishnan has referred to Kamban's debt to Ilango in this respect. But he sees a difference between the two. He says that the epic awe and the religious awe go together in Kamban whereas in Ilango they occur in succession in different books and this point is debatable. He does not see that they are two types of myths and Kannaki is not seen as **Avatār** by any one but she only evolves into the divine and that is recognised by others (Kovalan, Salini, the gatekeeper of the Madurai King) throughout. There is no question of **evolution** in Rama; there is only revelation.

39. **Paradise Lost,** IV, 306-310.

40. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xix, 68.

41. **Purgatory,** Canto XXX.

42. **Kāṉal Vari,** p.

43. **King Lear,** IV, vii, 57-59.

44. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xvi, 71-82.

45. John Holloway, **"The Story of the Night" Shakespeare: King Lear,** ed. Frank Kermode (London: Macmillan, 1969), pp.203-227; p.222.

46. We can also find a parallel in both suffering because of a curse and in transcending their fate through love and humility. The tragedy of Madhavi can be related to the curse on Urvasi which of course works through Madhavi's character also.

47. **Cilappatikāram,** I, i, 634, I, ii, 90.

48. Ibid, I, iii, 175.

49. Ibid, I, iv, 57-59.

50. Ibid, I, v, 237-40.

51. **King Lear,** IV, vii, 46-47.

52. Ibid, V, iii, 20-21.

53. Ibid, IV, vii, 45.

54. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xxiii, 195-200.

55. Hudson, Caste in India (Oxford, 1961) rpt. "Affinities with Mediterranean Cults", **Tamil Culture and Civilization,** ed. X.S. Thaninayagam, (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1970), p.213.

56. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, **Kāviya Kālam** (Madras: Tamil Puttakalayam, 1957), p.307 distinguishes between Itikasa and Kaviya and says that the former is masculine and the latter feminine. Our distinction is slightly different. What we mean is that the Tamil Version seems to give more prominence to the love of Sita than the Original--eventhough here Rama is also important. But again Rama's virtues appear to be more feminine in the sense that he is governed by love.

57. F.Engels, **The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State** (1891, rpt. Moscow: Progress Publishers 1948), p.10.

58. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xx, 36-40. Of course in negative terms.

59. With Mayoon and Murugan respectively.

60. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xii, vv. 7-9.
and N.M.Venkatasamy Nattar's comment in **Cilappatikāram Original with Notes,**p.295.

61. If Cordelia symbolises love and charity at the human level, we see her also as a human counterpart to the divine love. Similarly if Kannaki represents human love and effort she also seems to suggest the intervention of a higher power.

62. For example, **Antony and Cleopatra,** I, iii, 10; I; iv, 57; IV, v, 22-23.

63. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xviii, 50-52.

64. **Antony and Cleopatra,** V, xi, 227-228.

65. **Cilappatikāram,** 2, xxiii, 179-80.

66. **Antony and Cleopatra,** V, ii, 281-285.

67. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xxiii, 182-183.

68. **Antony and Cleopatra,** V, ii, 227-28.

69. M.H.Abrams, **Natural Supernaturalism** (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p.53.

70. **King Lear,** IV, vii, 45-46.

71. **Cilappatikāram,** III, xiv, V.10.

72. **Antony and Cleopatra,** V, ii, 230-31.

73. Ibid, V, ii, 316-7.

CHAPTER V

1. Rev. Xavier Thaninayagam, "Nature and Natural in Kalyanasundaranar", **Tamil Culture,** X, No.4 (Oct-Dec. 1973), 1-20, p.5.

2. I.A. Richards, **Coleridge on Imagination,** (1938; rpt. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. 1962), p.156.

3. Ibid, pp.157-8.

4. Basil Willey, **The English Moralists,** (London: Methuen, 1964), p.76.

5. Thaninayagam, "Nature and Natural in Kalyanasundaranar", p.5.

6. David Horowitz, **Shakespeare: An Existential View** (1965, rpt. London: Social Science Paperbacks, 1968), p.118.

7. Danby, **Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature.** pp.15-20.

8. Spencer, **Shakespeare and The Nature of Man,** pp.6-7.

9. Abrams, **Natural Supernaturalism,** p.90.

10. **Macbeth,** I, v, 114.

11. **Michael,** 36, The Rainbow, 9.

12. **The Ancient Mariner,** Part IV.

13. Karl Marx: Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts: in Erick Fromm, **Marx's Concept of Man** (New York, 1961) trans. T.B. Bottomore, pp.131-2, 135. quoted in **Natural Supernaturalism,** p.315.

14. Coleridge, "On Poesy or Art", **Biographier Literaria,** II, 253-5.

15. Spencer, **Shakespeare and the Nature of Man,** p.209.

16. Albert Schweitzer, **My Life and thought,** pp.158-9; quoted in Henn, **The Harvest of Tragedy,** p.282.

17. W.H. Clemen, **The Development of Shakespeare's Imagery** (1951, rpt. London: Methuen, 1969), p.70.

18. Ibid, p.66.

19. Ibid, p.77.

20. **Romeo and Juliet,** I, i, 116-118; 131-133.

21. **Cilappatikāram,** I, v, 1-5.

22. **Romeo and Juliet,** II, iii, 1-4.

23. **Cilappatikāram,** I, iv, 20-25.

24. **Hamlet,** I, i, 166-167.

25. **Macbeth,** I, vi, 4-9.

26. **Cilappatikāram,** I, vii, v.27.

27. **Julius Caesar,** I, ii, 364-67, **Hamlet,** I, ii, 108-125.

28. **Macbeth,** I, i, 10-11; I, ii, 38.

29. **Hamlet,** I, ii, 151-53; 166-167. It is significant that Horatio who survives the tragedy should be alive to the existence of the eternal order.

30. F.R. Leavis, "How to Teach Reading", **Education and the University: A Sketch foı an English School,** (1943 rpt. London: Chatto and Windus, 1961), pp.105-138; p.124.

31. T.B. Tomlinson, **A Study of Elizabethan and Jacobean Tragedy** (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1964), p.28-30. According to him the shift of emphasis from character to action and poetry brought to light new values.

32. Ibid, p.27.

33. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xvi, 40.

34. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xvii, 1-10, and **Ụraippāṭṭumaṭai.**

35. **King Lear,** III, iv, 151.

36. Ibid, III, vi, 76-77.

37. Even in his early pleadings to Nature he is struggling towards that kinship with nature.

38. **King Lear,** IV, iv, 15-18.

39. Abrams, **Natural Supernaturalism,** pp.106-107.

40. Ibid, p.112.

41. **Cilappatikāram,** I, iv, 1.

42. Ibid, I, i, 1-12.

43. John Milton, **Samson Agonistes,** Great Books of the Western World, Vol.32 ed. R.M.Hutchins (London: Encyclopaedia Britan-nica, Inc. 1952), p.376. lines 1699-1707.

44. Michael Lloyd, "Cleopatra as Isis" **Shakespeare Quarterly,** Vol XII, 85-94.

45. David Daiches, "Myth, Metaphor and Poetry", **More Literary Essays,** (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp.1-18, p.7.

46. Ibid, p.7.

47. Ibid, p.2.

48. G.S. Kirk, **Myth, its meaning and function in Ancient and other cultures** (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1970), p.28.

49. Jane Harrison, **Epilogemona to the Study of Greek Religion,** p.35. quoted Ibid, p.273.

50. Susanne Langer, **The Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer**, quoted Ibid, p.22.

51. Ibid, p.34.

52. Compare, **King Lear.**

53. Kirk, **Myth,** p.40.

54. Welleck and Warren, **Theory of Literature,** p.236.

55. Kirk, **Myth,** p.250.

56. Ibid, p.251.

57. **Antony and Cleopatra,** -- For example: II, v, 10; I, v, 25.

58. Ibid, I, iii, 68-69.

59. Horowitz, **Shakespeare: An Existential View,** pp.130-31.

60. E.O. James, **The Ancient Gods,** (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1960), p.165.

61. **Michael,** 203.

62. Arnold J.Toynbee, "Religion: What I Believe and What I disbelieve", **Experiences** (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp.166-7.

63. **Paradise Lost,** Book IV, 268-72.

64. James, **The Ancient Gods,** pp.79-80.

65. Ibid, p.81.

66. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xxiii, 64-66; xxiv, 45-49.

67. Ibid, I, vii, vv.25-27.

68. Ibid, III, xxvi, 6.

69. Ibid, III, vv, 1-18.

70. Ibid, I, ii, 30-31.

71. Ibid, I, i, 1-12.

72. Sir James George Frazer, **The Golden Bough,** Abridged edition 1922; (rpt. London: Macmillan, 1963), p.394.

CHAPTER VI

1. Murray Krieger, **The Tragic Vision: Variations on a Theme in Literary Interpretation** (1960; rpt. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), p.3.

2. Ibid, p.5.

3. Humphry House, **Aristotle's Poetics,** rev. by Colin Hardie (Ludhiana : Lyall Book Depot, 1966), p.13.

4. Krieger, **The Tragic Vision,** pp.5-6.

5. Butcher, VI, 2.

6. Ibid, pp.260-61.

7. Williams, **Modern Tragedy,** p.50.

8. Auerbach, **Mimesis,** p.314.

9. Ibid, p.315.

10. Ibid, p.22.

11. **Cilappatikāram,** I, i, 23.

12. Ibid, I, i, 21-24.

13. **Tolkāppiam,** Porul, v.23.

14. Butcher, **Aristotle's Theory,** pp.354-355.

15. Williams, **Modern Tragedy,** p.35.

16. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xxiii, 138-178.

17. Frye, **Anatomy of Criticism,** pp.33-35.

18. **Cilappatikāram,** III, xxix, 10-11.

19. **Antony and Cleopatra,** V, ii, 307-8.

20. Ibid, IV, iv, 5-7.

21. **Cilappatikāram,** I, iv, 57.

22. Butcher, xxvi, 4-7.

23. Henry Jame's Concept is applied to **Hamlet** by Fergusson, **The idea of Theater.**

24. Williams, **Modern Tragedy,** p.34.

25. Ibid, p.35.

26. **Cilappatikāram,** I, i, 28, 92.

27. **Cilappatikāram,** III, xxx, 150-164.

28. **Kaṇṇan Pāṭṭu:** Kannan En Sevakan.

29. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xii, 47-50.

30. T.S. Eliot, **Murder in the Cathedral,** Part I, 30,43.

31. Quoted in Humphry House, **Aristotle's Poetics.**

32. **Cilappatikāram,** I, xvii, Songs 1-3.

33. C.M.Bowra, **Primitive Song** (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962) p.48.

34. Ibid, p.31.

35. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xvii, 1-7.

36. Ibid, III, xxiv, 6.

37. Kitto, **Form and Meaning,** p.150.

38. Sophocles, **Oedipus at Colonus,** 1658-62.

39. Ibid, 631-635. Of course Theseus has to be persuaded to honour Oedipus.

40. Ibid, 607-609.

41. Bowra, **Sophoclean Tragedy,** p.334 and Cil. III, 26, 1-25.

42. Bowra, **Sophoclean Tragedy,** pp.354-355.

43. Milton, **Samson Agonistes,** 1699-1707.

44. Ibid, 2394.

45. A.S.P. Woodhouse, "Tragic effect in Samson Agonistes". **Milton,** ed. A.E.Barker, pp.447-660.

46. **Cilappatikāram, Nūrkaṭṭurai,** xxx, 148-163. The worship of Kannaki brings enemies together and a mood of charity prevails everywhere. Kannaki has come to symbolise universal love which makes a brotherhood of man possible.

47. M.P. Sivagnanam, in **Cilappatikārat Tiraṉ Āyvu,** (Madras: Poonkodi Patipakam, 1973), p.239 says that Kannaki becomes superior to all the existing gods. Of course the worship symbolises the emergence of a new humanism, but we would rather say that she is the underlying unity of all the regional gods. It is interesting to note that the birth of a humanistic creed should go with that of a national consciousness.

48. Henn, **The Harvest of Tragedy,** pp.263 - 266; E.M. **Shakespeare's Last Plays** (1938; rpt. London, Chatto and Windus, 1968) p.18.

49. Henn, **The Harvest,** p.263.

50. Ibid, p.265.

51. Brooks, **Tragic Themes,** pp.176-77.

52. James Joyce, **The Portrait of the Artist as a Young man** (New York: B.W. Huebach, 1918), p.239.

53. Martz "The Saint as Tragic Hero", p.153.

54. Bodkin, **Archetypal Patterns,** p.23.

55. Richards, **Principles of Literary Criticism.**

56. Jan Kott, **"King Lear or Edgome," Shakespeare: King Lear** ed. Frank Kermode, pp.270-292.

57. Samuel Johnson, **The Preface and Notes,** 1765.

58. J. Stampfer, "The Catharsis of King Lear" in **Shakespeare Survey,** XIII, 1-10, p.10.

59. Bradley, **Shakespearean Tragedy,** pp.325-326.

60. Ibid, 324-325.

61. Ibid, p.325.

62. Ibid, p.325.

63. Danby, **Shakespeare and the Doctrine of Nature,** p.204.

64. Quoted in Brenton's **Principles of Tragedy,** pp.60-61.

65. **Kambarāmāyaṇam,** Ayotyā Kāṇṭam,
Nakarniṅku Paṭalam,
Kuḻaikkiṉra Kavariyiṉri Koṟṟa Veṇkuṭaiyu
miṉri Iḻaikkiṉra Vitimuṉ Cellat Tarumam
Piṉṉiraṅki ēka.

66. **The Prelude,** III, 161-63.

67. Bradley, **Shakespearean Tragedy,** p.327.

68. Bradley, Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra",**Oxford Lectures on Poetry,** p.292.

69. **King Lear,** V, 2, 8-9.

70. **Antony and Cleopatra,** IV, xiv, 51-54. V, ii, 285-288.

71. Ibid, V, ii, 285-288. Probably Cleopatra is thinking of only a new earth.

72. Anniah Gowda, "The Tempest and Shakuntala: Retribution and Recognition," **The Literary Half-yearly,** XV, No.11 (July,74), 23-42.

73. Wordsworth, **The Borderers,** 1943-4.

74. **The Birth of Tragedy,** pp.956-960.

75. **Samson Agonistes,** 175-77

76. E.F. Carritt, **The Theory of Beauty** (1914; rpt. London: Methuen, 1962), p.47.

77. Stevenson, **Virginibus Puerisque,** p.260, quoted ibid., p.86.

78. Joyce, **The Portrait of the Artist,** pp.232,233.

79. Dr. Raneiro Gnoli, **The Aesthetic Experience according to Abhinavagupta** , ed. V.Raghavan and Nagendra-- **An Introduction to Indian Poetics,** (Madras: Macmillan, 1970), pp.75-81, p.77.

80. P. Lal "**Aristotle and T.S.Eliot on Dramaturgy" Literary criticism" European and Indian Traditions,** pp.116-127.

81. Cf. Kenneth Muir, **The Tragic Sequence** with Tomlinson, **Elizabethan and Jacobean Tragedy,** pp.25-30.

82. Ka. Naa. Subramaniam, "Literary Criticism in Tamil Considered in the Modern Context", **Literary Criticism: European and Indian Traditions,** p.153.

83. Ibid, p.152.

84. Ibid.

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3. Henry H.H.Remak, "Comparative Literature: Its Definition and Function", **Comparative Literature: Method and Perspective,** ed. Newton P.Stallknecht and D. Horst Frenz rpt. 1961 (Carbondale & Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1971), p.14.

4. Henn, **The Harvest of Tragedy,** p.65.

5. Bradley, **Shakespearean Tragedy,** pp.36-37.

6. **Tiruvāymoḻi,** 1.

7. St. John, xii,240.

8. Quoted in Henn, **The Harvest of Tragedy,** pp.74-75.

9. Quoted in Williams, **Modern Tragedy,** p.42.

10. **Pāñcāli Sapatam,** V, v, 283.

11. **Murder in the Cathedral,** Part I, 7-10.

12. Ibid. Part I, 208-217,705.

13. James, **Comparative Religion,** p.166.

14. T.S. Eliot, **Four Quartets,** I, 97-98.

15. **Crossing the Brooklyn Ferry,** V.6.

16. Fyoder Dostoevsky, **The Brothers Karamazov,** trans. Constance Garnett, 2 Vols (1927; rpt. London: Dent and Sons, 1957), II, 440.

17. Richard B.Sewall, "The Tragic World of Karamazovs", **Tragic Themes in Western Literature,** ed. Cleanth Brooks pp.107-127; p.127.

18. **The Prelude,** 162-170.

19. **Paradise Lost,** XII, 477-78.

20. Bowra, **Sophoclean Tragedy,** pp.377-78.

21. Quoted in Ulrich Weisstein, **Comparative Literature and Literary Theory: Survey and Introduction,** trans. Riggan (Bloomington: Indiana Press, 1973), p.127.

22. Ibid, pp.138-139.

23. **Cilappatikāram,** I, ii, 73-80.

24. **Othello,** I, i,66.

25. **Cilappatikāram,** II, xx, 75.

26. Weisstein, **Comparative Literature and Literary Theory,** p.137.

27. David Dean Shulman, **Tamil Temple Myths** (Princeton New Jersy : Princeton University Press, 1980), pp.192-211.

28. Quoted in Mark Roberts, **The Tradition of Romantic Morality** (London : Macmillan, 1973), p.312.

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30. James, **Comparative Religion,** p.136.

31. Jane Harrison, **Themis : A Study in the Social Origins of Greek Religion** (London : Merlin Press, 1963), p.10.

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38. V. Kanakasabhai, **The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago** (Tirunelveli; The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, 1956), pp.54-55.

39. T.P. Meenakshisundaranar, in his Foreword to V. Kanaka sabhai's **Twin Epics** (Tirunelveli: The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, 1956).

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